EDINBURGH

SKETCHES AND MEMORIES

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BY

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE following Papers, though in their collected state they have a certain continuity of general subject, were written at different times and for different purposes. One is a modified reprint of an article which appeared in the *Westminster Review* as long ago as 1856. Seven of the others were contributed, at intervals within the last twelve years, to *Macmillan's Magazine*, *The Scotsman*, or *The Scots Observer*, and are reprinted now with courteous permission. The remaining five are from manuscript of various dates since 1867, and are now published for the first time. An occasional small recurrence of fact or of phrase in the series may be excused in consideration that the Papers, thus written separately, may still be read separately.

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QUEEN MARY'S EDINBURGH[1]

I.—QUEEN MARY'S RETURN TO SCOTLAND, AUGUST 1561

On a clear day the inhabitants of Edinburgh, by merely ascending the Calton Hill or any other of the familiar heights in or around their city, can have a view of nearly the whole length of their noble estuary, the Firth of Forth. To the right or east, its entrance from the open sea, between the two shires of Fife and Haddington, is marked most conspicuously on the Haddingtonshire side by a distant conical mound, called Berwick Law, rising with peculiar distinctness from the northward curve of land which there bounds the horizon. It is thither that the eye is directed if it would watch the first appearance of steamers and ships from any part of the world that may be bound up the Firth for Edinburgh by its port of Leith. Moving thence westward, the eye can command easily the twenty miles more of the Firth which these ships and steamers have to traverse. The outlines of both shores, though the breadth between them averages twelve miles, may be traced with wonderful sharpness, pleasingly defined as they are by their little bays and promontories, and by the succession of towns and fishing villages with which they are studded. Of these,

[1] From *The Scotsman* of 18th, 19th, and 21st August 1886.

Musselburgh on the near side marks the transition from the shire of Haddington to that of Edinburgh; after which point the Firth begins to narrow. Just below Edinburgh itself, where its port of Leith confronts the Fifeshire towns of Kinghorn and Burntisland, with the island of Inchkeith a little to the right between, the breadth is about six miles. There the main maritime interest of the Firth ceases, few ships going farther up; but, for any eye that can appreciate scenic beauty, there remains the delight of observing the continued course of the Firth westward to Queensferry and beyond, a riband of flashing water between the two coasts which are known prosaically as those of Linlithgowshire and West Fifeshire, but which, in their quiet and mystic remoteness, look like a tract of some Arthurian dreamland.

While something of all this is to be seen on almost any day from any of the eminences in or near Edinburgh, it is only on rare occasions that it can be all seen to perfection. Frequently, even in sunny weather, when the sky is blue above, a haze overspreads the Firth, concealing the Fifeshire shore, or blurring it into a vague cloud-like bank. Sometimes, on the other hand, when there is little sunshine, and the day seems rather sombre in the Edinburgh streets, the view of the Firth and of the other surroundings of the city from any of the higher spots is amazingly distinct to the utmost possible distance, though with the distinctness of a drawing in pen and ink. Worst of all the atmospheric conditions for a survey of the Firth, or of the scenery generally, from Edinburgh, is that of the thick, dull, drizzling, chilling, and piercing fog or mist, called locally a *haar*, which the easterly wind brings up at certain seasons from the sea. Up the

Firth this *haar* will creep or roll, converting the whole aerial gap between the opposed shores into a mere continuous trough of seething and impenetrable mist, or of rain and mist commingled, drenching the Fife-shire hills on the one side, enveloping all Edinburgh on the other, and pushing itself still westward and inland over the higher and narrower reaches of the estuary, till the aforesaid tract of gleaming Arthurian scenery is absorbed into the long foggy gloom, and even Alloa and Stirling feel the discomfort. No chance then, from any height near Edinburgh, of seeing the ships and steamers in any part of their course from the mouth of the Firth to the port of Leith. If any there be, they are down in the vast abysm of mist, at anchor for safety, or piloting their Leithward course slowly and cautiously through the opaque element, with bells ringing, horns blowing, and now and then a boom from the cannon on the deck to warn off other vessels or ascertain their own whereabouts. So even during the day; but, when the *haar* lasts through the night, and the opaque gray of the air is deepened into an equally opaque black or umber, the confusion is still greater. The sounds of fog-signals from the bewildered vessels are incessant; the shore-lights from the piers and landing-places can throw their yellow glare but a little way into the turbid consistency; and, if any adventurous vessel does manage to warp herself into port in such circumstances, it is with excited vociferation and stamping among those on board, and no less hurry-skurry among the men ashore who assist in the feat. Happily, an Edinburgh *haar* at once of such dense quality and of long duration is a rare occurrence. April and May are the likeliest months for the phenomenon, and it passes usually

within twenty-four hours. It may come later in the year, however, and may last longer.

Just after the middle of August 1561, as we learn from contemporary records, there was a *haar* of unusual intensity and continuance over Edinburgh and all the vicinity. It began on Sunday the 17th, and it lasted, with slight intermissions, till Thursday the 21st. "Besides the surfett weat and corruptioun of the air," writes Knox, then living in Edinburgh, "the myst was so thick and dark that skairse mycht any man espy ane other the lenth of two pair of butts." It was the more unfortunate because it was precisely in those days of miserable fog and drizzle that Mary, Queen of Scots, on her return to Scotland after her thirteen years of residence and education in France, had to form her first real acquaintance with her native shores and the capital of her realm.

She had left Calais for the homeward voyage on Thursday the 14th August, with a retinue of about 120 persons, French and Scottish, embarked in two French state galleys, attended by several transports. They were a goodly company, with rich and splendid baggage. The Queen's two most important uncles, indeed,—the great Francis de Lorraine, Duke of Guise, and his brother, Charles de Lorraine, the Cardinal,—were not on board. They, with the Duchess of Guise and other senior lords and ladies of the French Court, had bidden Mary farewell at Calais, after having accompanied her thither from Paris, and after the Cardinal had in vain tried to persuade her not to take her costly collection of pearls and other jewels with her, but to leave them in his keeping till it should be seen how she might fare among her Scottish subjects. But on board the Queen's own galley were three others

of her Guise or Lorraine uncles,—the Duke d'Aumale, the Grand Prior, and the Marquis d'Elbeuf,—with M. Damville, son of the Constable of France, and a number of French gentlemen of lower rank, among whom one notes especially young Pierre de Bourdeilles, better known afterwards in literary history as Sieur de Brantôme, and a sprightly and poetic youth from Dauphiné, named Chastelard, one of the attendants of M. Damville. With these were mixed the Scottish contingent of the Queen's train, her four famous "Marys" included,—Mary Fleming, Mary Livingstone, Mary Seton, and Mary Beaton. They had been her playfellows and little maids of honour long ago in her Scottish childhood; they had accompanied her when she went abroad, and had lived with her ever since in France; and they were now returning with her, Scoto-Frenchwomen like herself, and all of about her own age, to share her new fortunes.

It is to Brantôme that we owe what account we have of the voyage from Calais. He tells us how the Queen could hardly tear herself away from her beloved France, but kept gazing at the French coast hour after hour so long as it was in sight, shedding tears with every look, and exclaiming again and again, "*Adieu, ma chère France! je ne vous verray jamais plus!*" He tells us how, when at length they did lose sight of France, and were on the open sea northward with a fair wind, there was some anxiety lest they should be intercepted, and the Queen taken prisoner by an English fleet. In the peculiar state of the relations between England and Scotland at the time, this was not an impossibility, and would hardly have been against the law of nations. There had been some angry correspondence between Elizabeth and Mary

respecting the non-ratification by Mary of a certain "Treaty of Edinburgh" of the previous year, stipulating that she would desist from her claim to Elizabeth's throne of England. Elizabeth had consequently refused Mary's application for a safeguard for her homeward journey; and there was actually an English squadron in the North Sea available for the capture of Mary if Elizabeth had chosen to give the word. But, though the English squadron does seem to have waylaid the French galleys, and one of the transports following the galleys was taken and detained for some reason or other, the galleys themselves, by rapid sailing or by English sufferance, threw that danger behind, and approached the Scottish coast in perfect safety. What then astonished Brantôme, and what he seems to have remembered all his life with a kind of horror in association with his first introduction to Queen Mary's native climate and kingdom, was the extraordinary fog, the *si grand brouillard*, in which they suddenly found themselves. "On a Sunday morning, the day before "we came to Scotland," he says, "there rose so great a "fog that we could not see from the stern to the prow, "much to the discomfiture of the pilots and crews, so "that we were obliged to let go the anchor in the open "sea, and take soundings to know where we were." Brantôme's measure of time becomes a little incoherent at this point; and we hardly know from his language whether it was outside the Firth of Forth altogether, or inside of the Firth about Berwick Law, that the fog caught them, if indeed he remembered that there was such a thing as an estuary at all between the open sea and Leith. He distinctly says, however, that they were a whole day and night in the fog, and that he and the other Frenchmen were blaspheming Scotland

a good deal on account of it before they did reach Leith. That, as other authorities inform us, was about ten o'clock in the morning of Tuesday the 19th.

The Leith people and the Edinburgh people were quite unprepared, the last intimation from France having pointed to the end of the month as the probable time of the Queen's arrival, if she were to be expected at all. But the cannon-shots from the galleys, as they contrived to near Leith harbour, were, doubtless, a sufficient advertisement. Soon, so far as the fog would permit, all Leith was in proper bustle, and all the political and civic dignitaries that chanced to be in Edinburgh were streaming to Leith. Not till the evening, according to one account, not till next morning, according to another, did the Queen leave her galley and set foot on shore. Then, to allow a few hours more for getting her Palace of Holyrood, and her escort thither, into tolerable readiness, she took some rest in the house in Leith deemed most suitable for her reception, the owner being Andrew Lamb, a wealthy Leith merchant. It was in the afternoon of Wednesday, the 20th of August, that there was the procession on horseback of the Queen, her French retinue, and the gathered Scottish lords and councillors, through the two miles of road which led from Leith to Holyrood. On the way the Queen was met by a deputation of the Edinburgh craftsmen and their apprentices, craving her royal pardon for the ring-leaders in a recent riot, in which the Tolbooth had been broken open and the Magistrates insulted and defied. This act of grace accorded as a matter of course, the Queen was that evening in her hall of Holyrood, the most popular of sovereigns for the moment, her uncles and other chiefs of her escort with

her, and the rest dispersed throughout the apartments, while outside, in spite of the fog, there were bonfires of joy in the streets and up the slopes of Arthur Seat, and a crowd of cheering loiterers moved about in the space between the palace-gate and the foot of the Canongate. Imparting some regulation to the proceedings of this crowd, for a while at least, was a special company of the most "honest" of the townsmen, "with instruments of musick and with musicians," admitted within the gate, and tendering the Queen their salutations, instrumental and vocal, under her chamber-window. "The melody, as she alledged, lyked "her weill, and she willed the same to be continewed "some nightis after." This is Knox's account; but Brantôme tells a different story. After noting the wretchedness of the hackneys provided for the procession from Leith to Holyrood, and the poorness of their harnessings and trappings, the sight of which, he says, made the Queen weep, he goes on to mention the evening serenade under the windows of Holyrood as the very completion of the day's disagreeables. The Abbey itself, he admits, was a fine enough building; but, just as the Queen had supped and wanted to go to sleep, "there came under her window five or six "hundred rascals of the town to serenade her with vile "fiddles and rebecks, such as they do not lack in that "country, setting themselves to sing psalms, and sing-"ing so ill and in such bad accord that there could be "nothing worse. Ah! what music, and what a lullaby "for the night!" Whether Knox's account of the Queen's impressions of the serenade or Brantôme's is to be accepted, there can be no doubt that the matter and intention of the performance were religious. Our authentic picture, therefore, of Queen Mary's first

night in Holyrood after her return from France is that of the Palace lit up within, the dreary fog still persistent outside, the bonfires on Arthur Seat and other vantage-grounds flickering through the fog, and the portion of the wet crowd nearest the Palace singing Protestant psalms for the Queen's delectation to an accompaniment of violins.

Next day, Thursday the 21st, this memorable Edinburgh *haar* of August 1561 came to an end. Arthur Seat and the other heights and ranges of the park round Holyrood wore, we may suppose, their freshest verdure; and Edinburgh, dripping no longer, shone forth, we may hope, in her sunniest beauty. The Queen could then become more particularly acquainted with the Palace in which she had come to reside, and with the nearer aspects of the town to which the Palace was attached, and into which she had yet to make her formal entry.

II.—PLAN AND FABRIC OF THE TOWN IN 1561

THEN, as now, the buildings that went by the general name of Holyrood were distinguishable into two portions. There was the Abbey, now represented only by one beautiful and spacious fragment of ruin, called the Royal Chapel, but then, despite the spoliations to which it had been subjected by recent English invasions, still tolerably preserved in its integrity as the famous edifice, in Early Norman style, which had been founded in the twelfth century by David I., and had been enlarged in the fifteenth by additions in the later and more florid Gothic. Close by this was Holyrood House, or the Palace proper, built in the earlier part

of the sixteenth century, and chiefly by James IV., to form a distinct royal dwelling, and so supersede that occasional accommodation in the Abbey itself which had sufficed for Scottish sovereigns before Edinburgh was their habitual or capital residence. One block of this original Holyrood House still remains in the two-turreted projection of the present Holyrood which adjoins the ruined relic of the Abbey, and which contains the rooms now specially shown as "Queen Mary's Apartments." But the present Holyrood, as a whole, is a construction of the reign of Charles II., and gives little idea of the Palace in which Mary took up her abode in 1561. The two-turreted projection on the left was not balanced then, as now, by a similar two-turreted projection on the right, with a façade of less height between, but was flanked on the right by a continued chateau-like frontage, of about the same height as the turreted projection, and at a uniform depth of recess from it, but independently garnished with towers and pinnacles. The main entrance into the Palace from the great outer courtyard was through this chateau-like flank, just about the spot where there is the entrance through the present middle façade; and this entrance led, like the present, into an inner court or quadrangle, built round on all the four sides. That quadrangle of chateau, touching the Abbey to the back from its north-eastern corner, and with the two-turreted projection to its front from its north-western corner, constituted, indeed, the main bulk of the Palace. There were, however, extensive appurtenances of other buildings at the back or at the side farthest from the Abbey, forming minor inner courts, while part of that side of the great outer courtyard which faced the entrance was occupied by offices

belonging to the Palace, and separating the courtyard from the adjacent purlieus of the town. For the grounds of both Palace and Abbey were encompassed by a wall, having gates at various points of its circuit, the principal and most strongly guarded of which was the Gothic porch admitting from the foot of the Canongate into the front courtyard. The grounds so enclosed were ample enough to contain gardens and spaces of plantation, besides the buildings and their courts. Altogether, what with the buildings themselves, what with the courts and gardens, and what with the natural grandeur of the site,—a level of deep and wooded park, between the Calton heights and crags on the one hand and the towering shoulders of Arthur Seat and precipitous escarpment of Salisbury Crags on the other,—Holyrood in 1561 must have seemed, even to an eye the most satiated with palatial splendours abroad, a sufficiently impressive dwelling-place to be the metropolitan home of Scottish royalty.

The town itself, of which Holyrood was but the eastward terminus, corresponded singularly well. Edinburgh even now is, more than almost any other city in Europe, a city of heights and hollows, and owes its characteristic and indestructible beauty to that fact. But the peculiarity of Old Edinburgh was that it consisted mainly of that one continuous ridge of street which rises, by gradual ascent for a whole mile, from the deeply-ensconced Holyrood at one end to the high Castle Rock at the other, sending off on both sides a multiplicity of narrow foot-passages, called closes, with a few wider and more street-like cuttings, called wynds, all of which slope downward from the main ridge in some degree, while many descend from it with the steepness of mountain gullies into the

parallel ravines. Whoever walks now from Holyrood to the Castle, up the Canongate, the High Street, and the Lawnmarket, walks through that portion of the present "Old Town" which figures to us the main Edinburgh of Queen Mary's time, and is in fact its residue. But imagination and some study of old maps and records are necessary to divest this residue of its acquired irrelevancies, and so to reconvert it into the actual Edinburgh of three hundred years ago. The divisions of the great ridge of street from Holyrood to the Castle were the same as now, with the same names; but objects once conspicuous in each have disappeared, and the features of each have been otherwise altered.

The first part of the long ascent from Holyrood was the Canongate. Though occupying nearly half of the whole, and in complete junction with the Edinburgh proper up to which it led, it was a separate "burgh of regality," which had formed itself, as its name implies, under the protection of the abbots and canons of Holyrood. By virtue of that original, it was not yet included in the municipal jurisdiction of the Edinburgh Magistrates and Town Council, but held out under a magistracy of its own. Hence some characteristics distinguishing this lower part of the ascent from the rest. The old Canongate was by no means the dense exhibition of dingy picturesqueness now known as the Canongate of Edinburgh, with repulsive entries and closes on both sides, leading to cages of crammed humanity of the poorer sort, or to inner recesses of bone-yards, pipe-clay yards, and the like. It had the sparseness and airiness of a suburb of the Court. The houses, whether of stone or partly of wood, were pretty thickly put together, indeed,

along the immediate street-margins, with the inevitable access to many of them by entries and closes, but did not go so deeply back on either side as not to leave room for pleasant gardens and tracts of vacant ground behind. A paved and causewayed street, ascending continuously between two rows of houses, of irregular forms and varying heights, but few of them of more than three storeys; other houses at the backs of these to some little depth all the way, reached by closes from the street, and generally set gablewise to those in front; and, behind these again, garden grounds and grassy slopes and hollows: such was the ancient Canongate. In token of its claims to be a separate burgh, it had its own market cross, and, near this, its own Tolbooth or prison and council-house. The present Canongate Tolbooth, though an antique object, is only the successor of the older Canongate Tolbooth of Queen Mary's time.

The ending of the Canongate and beginning of the High Street of Edinburgh proper was at a cross street, the left arm of which, descending from the ridge into the ravine on that side, was called St. Mary's Wynd, while the arm to the right was called Leith Wynd. Here, to mark more emphatically the transition from the smaller burgh into the greater, one encountered the separating barrier of the Nether Bow Port. It has left no trace of itself now, but was a battlemented stone structure, spanning the entire breadth of the thoroughfare, with an arched gateway in the middle and gates for admission or exclusion. That passed, one was in the lower portion of the High Street, called specifically the Nether Bow. Here, it was not merely the increasing breadth of the thoroughfare and the increasing height of the houses that

showed one had come within the boundaries of the real civic and commercial Edinburgh. No such sparseness of building now as in the Canongate; no mere double fringe of houses to a short depth, with entries and closes ending in gardens and vacant ground; but a sense of being between two masses of densely-peopled habitations, clothing the declivities from the ridge to their lowest depths on both sides, and penetrable only by those courts and wynds of which one saw the mouths, but the labyrinthine intricacy of which in the course of their descent baffled conception.

The same sensation accompanied one on advancing still upwards into the middle and broadest part of the High Street. Here the street had much the same striking appearance as now. One saw a spacious incline of oblong piazza, rather than a street, lined by buildings, some of solid stone throughout and very tall, others lower and timber-fronted, all of quaint architecture from their basements to their peaked roofs and chimneys, and not a few with "fore-stairs," or projecting flights of steps from doors on the first floor down to the causeway. It was here, too, that the lateral fringes of habitation down the steep alleys were of greatest width. That on the right was stopped only at the bottom of the ravine on that side by a lake called the North Loch, while that on the left, after reaching the bottom of the other ravine, mingled itself there with an independent and very aristocratic suburb that had grown up in the ravine itself, under the name of the Cowgate, as a southern parallel of relief to the main Edinburgh of the ridge above. This low-lying, aristocratic suburb, though accessible from the piazza of the High Street by the

wynds and closes on the southern side, did not come easily into the cognisance of a stranger that might be exploring the piazza itself. He had enough to arrest his attention where he was. One difference between the old High Street and the present, despite their general resemblance, consisted in a huge obstruction, now removed, which interrupted the old High Street at its very midmost point, immediately above the Town Cross. Just above the spot now marked in the causeway as the site of this Town Cross, and beginning exactly where the great church of St. Giles protrudes its complex pile on the left and raises into the sky its remarkable tower and open octagonal crown of stonework, there stood in the old High Street a stack of lofty masonry, stretching up the centre of the street for a considerable way, and leaving only a gloomy and tortuous lane for pedestrians along the buttresses of the church on one side, and a somewhat wider channel, —called the Luckenbooths,—for shops and traffic, on the other. The lower portion of this obstructive stack of masonry belonged to the Luckenbooths, and was included in the name, the basement being let out in shops or stalls for goods, while the upper floors were parcelled out as dwellings. The higher and larger portion, separated from the lower by a narrow suture called "The Kirk Stile," was nothing less than the famous Heart of Midlothian itself, or Old Tolbooth, which had served hitherto as the *prætorium burgi*, at once the jail of Edinburgh, its Town Council House, the seat of the Supreme Courts of Justice for Scotland, and the occasional meeting-place of a Scottish Parliament. Little wonder if one lingered round this core of the High Street and of the whole town. The channel of the Luckenbooths on one side of the street,

the lane between the Tolbooth and St. Giles's on the other, and the cross passage or Kirk Stile, were worth more than one perambulation, if only on account of their amusing interconnection; at the back of St. Giles's Church, overhanging the Cowgate, was St. Giles's Churchyard, the chief cemetery of the town; and the Tolbooth alone might well detain one by its look and the interest of its associations. In 1561 they were voting it to be too old and decayed, if not too unsightly, for the various and important purposes which it had hitherto served; and within a few months from our present date there was to be an order for its demolition, and for the erection of another building more suitable for those purposes, and especially for the accommodation of the Lords of Council and Session. But, though they did then begin to take it down, and though a "New Tolbooth" or "Council House" *was* built near it in the same part of the High Street, the old or original Tolbooth escaped its doom, and was left standing after all. A little re-edified, it was to survive its more modern substitute, and to be known till 1817 as at least the Jail of Edinburgh and real old Heart of Midlothian. Some persons still alive can remember it.

The Tolbooth having been passed, one was again in an open piazza of tall or tallish houses, nearly as broad as the former piazza, but farther up the incline, and known indifferently as the High Street above the Tolbooth or as the Lawnmarket. Here, also, one could not but note the number of the closes and wynds on both sides, plunging down the house-laden slopes with break-neck precipitancy from the vertebral street. At the head of this piazza, however, where it began to narrow, and where there was an obstruction across it

in the form of a clumsy building called the Butter Tron or Weigh-House, there was one offshoot to the left of greater consequence than any mere wynd or close. This was the West Bow, a steep zigzag or spiral kind of street of antique houses, bringing one down to the deeply-sunk Grassmarket or Horsemarket, *i.e.* to a large square space opening out from the end of the Cowgate, and convenient for the country people coming into the town with cattle. Refraining from this descent by the West Bow, and keeping still to the vertebral street, one reached the last portion of the long causewayed and inhabited ridge. This was the Castle Hill, a narrowish continuation of the High Street, so steep as to require climbing rather than walking, but up which, nevertheless, there was still a plentiful straggling of houses, perched anyhow, with closes and paved yards reticulating what lateral depth of earth they could cling to, and with views of dizzying profundity from their back windows.

All civic Edinburgh thus left behind, and a military portal having been passed, one entered the precincts of the Castle itself,—the high, rocky stronghold which was more ancient than anything recognisable as most ancient in the Edinburgh beneath, which indeed had fostered that Edinburgh into its first existence and growth, and in which there were relics of days older than those of Malcolm Canmore and David I., older than the infancy of Holyrood Abbey. After the long walk upwards between the two lines of close-packed houses, with perpetual mouths of mere wynds and closes for a whole mile, it was something to emerge into the open air, even in the battlemented exterior esplanade or courtyard of this Castle, slanting up the hillside to the moat and drawbridge. It was more to

be allowed to pass the drawbridge and the other defences, and so to pursue the winding, rock-hewn track by which one mounted to the fortified aggregate of guard-houses, store-rooms, and royal towers, heaved together on the cliff-bound summit. What a platform then to stand on, beside the cannon, in any of the ledges of the embrasured parapet! The feeling for scenery, they say, had not been much developed in the sixteenth century; but no more in that century than in this could any human eye have gazed with indifference on the vast panorama of Scottish land and water that burst into the vision from Edinburgh's Castle Rock. To the north there were villages and farmsteads dotting the range of fields towards the Firth which is now covered with the streets of the New Town, and beyond these always the unwearying loveliness of the face of the Firth, with the boundary of the Fifeshire hills; to the west, the near Corstorphines, and over these also a tract of varied country, fading away up the course of the Firth into a purple suggestion of Stirling and the first spurs of the Highlands; to the south, the Braids and the Pentlands, hiding the pastoral territory of the Esks and the Upper Tweed, with its sleepy stretch towards the Borders and England. Scores of castles and keeps, each the residence of some nobleman or laird of distinction, could be counted within this sweep of the eye, north, west, and south, over the immediate vicinity of Edinburgh. But, if one's interest were still rather in the town itself, it was the eastward glance that would help most to complete and define the previous impressions. The whole sea-approach to Edinburgh by the Firth was now splendidly visible, with the already described curve of the hither coast from Berwick Law

to Leith ; the road from Leith to Holyrood was plainly discernible ; and the Canongate and Edinburgh could be looked down upon together, and seen in connected shape and ground-plan.

However slight the defences of the Canongate and Holyrood, Edinburgh proper, it could now be seen, was carefully enclosed and bastioned. On the north side, the North Loch, washing the base of the Castle Rock and filling the valley through which the railway now runs, was sufficient protection ; but all the rest of the town was bounded in by a wall, called the Flodden Wall. It had been constructed mainly in the panic after the battle of Flodden in 1513 to supersede an older and less perfect circumvallation, but had been much repaired and modified since. It started from the east end of the North Loch and ran thence along Leith Wynd and St. Mary's Wynd, crossing the High Street at the Nether Bow Port, and so shutting out the Canongate ; it then went so far south as to include the whole of the Cowgate and some space of the heights beyond the ravine of the Cowgate ; and the west bend of its irregular rectangle, after recrossing this ravine a little beyond the Grassmarket, riveted itself to the Castle Rock, on its most precipitous side, at the head of the High Street. There were several gates in the circuit of the wall besides the Nether Bow Port, the chief being the Cowgate Port, which was also to the east, the Kirk of Field Port (afterwards Potter Row Port) and Greyfriars Port (afterwards Bristo Port), both to the south, and the West Port, just beyond the Grassmarket and the sole inlet from the west. When these gates were closed, Edinburgh could rest within herself, tolerably secure from external attack, and conscious of a reserve of strength in the

cannon and garrison of the dominating Castle. Even if the town itself should yield to a siege, the Castle could hold out as a separate affair, impregnable, or almost impregnable, within her own fortifications. Successful assaults on Edinburgh Castle were among the rarest and most memorable accidents of Scottish history.

III.—THE EDINBURGH POPULATION IN 1561

Such having been the fabric or shell of Edinburgh in 1561, what was the contained life?

The entire population, the Canongate included, was probably less than 30,000; but, confined as this population was within such strait limits, obliged to accommodate itself to one such ridgy backbone of principal street, with off-going wynds and closes and but one considerable and low-lying parallel, and having to make up, therefore, by the vertical height of the houses for the impossibility of spreading them out, its compression of itself within the houses must have been exceedingly dense. As the political capital of the nation, the seat of Government and of the Central Law Courts, Edinburgh not only counted a number of families of rank among its habitual residents, but drew into it, for part of every year at least, representatives of the Scottish nobility, and of the lairds of mark and substance, from all the Lowland shires. Only a few of the greatest of these, however, had town mansions of their own, with any semblance of sequestered approaches and adjuncts, whether in the Canongate or the Cowgate. The majority of the nobles and lairds from the country, as well as of the habitual

residents of highest rank and means, such as the Senators of the College of Justice, had to be content with the better portions of those several-flatted or many-flatted tenements,—*insulæ* they would have been called in ancient Rome, but "lands" was and is the special Edinburgh word for them,—which rose at the sides of the High Street or in the wynds and closes that ran thence down the slopes. Distributed through the same "lands" were the families of the "merchants" and the "craftsmen," the two denominations that composed between them the whole body of the burghers proper. There was a chronic rivalry between these two denominations in the elections to the Town Council and in the management of affairs generally. The "merchants," whose business was ship-owning, the export and import of goods, and the sale of the imported goods at first hand, affected the superiority on the whole. There were individuals among the "craftsmen," however, as opulent as any of the "merchants." This was particularly the case with the craft of the goldsmiths, always a prominent craft in Edinburgh, and there, as in London, combining the trade of money-lending with the more especial arts of gold-working, silver-working, and jewellery, and so allying itself with the merchants and their transactions. Among the other "crafts," all regularly incorporated in brotherhoods, and each with its annually elected head, called the "deacon" of that craft, were the skinners or leather-dressers, the furriers, the wobsters or weavers, the tailors, the bonnet-makers, the hammermen or smiths and armourers, the waulkers or cloth-dressers, the cordiners or shoemakers, the wrights, the masons, the coopers, the fleshers or butchers, the baxters or bakers, the candle-makers,

and the barbers or barber-surgeons. Printing had been introduced into Edinburgh in 1507; and there had been a lingering of the craft in the town ever since by patents or permissions, but on the very smallest scale. To the "merchants" and "craftsmen" and their families there have to be added, of course, the numerous dependents of both these classes of the burghers, called in the simple language of that time their "servandis." Under that name were included not only the domestic servants of the wealthier merchants, but also their clerks and business assistants, and the journeymen and apprentices of the master-craftsmen, the last a very unruly portion of the community and known collectively as "the crafts-childer." Imagine all these domiciled, as was then the habit, with their masters, and stowed away somehow, "up and down in hole and bore," as one old document phrases the fact, in the workshops and "lands." Even then there remains to be taken into account the miscellany of small retail traders, in shops and stalls, which such a town required, with the peripatetic hucksters of fish and other provisions, and the rabble of nondescripts, living by erratic and hand-to-mouth occupations, and hanging on about the hostelries. All these too were "indwellers" in Edinburgh, and housed in the wynds and closes in some inconceivable manner. Moreover, as we learn too abundantly from the old burgh records, actual vagrants and beggars, whether of the able-bodied and turbulent variety, or of the cripple, diseased, and blind, soliciting alms by obstreperous whining and by the exhibition of their deformities, swarmed in Old Edinburgh with a persistency which all the police efforts of the authorities, with examples of scourgings and hangings for several generations,

had been unable to repress or diminish. Where *they* lived in overcrowded Edinburgh only St. Giles's steeple could now tell.

The overcrowding had its natural consequences. The sanitary condition of most European towns in the sixteenth century, the best English towns included, was incredibly bad; Scottish towns generally were behind most English towns in this respect; but Old Edinburgh had a character all her own for perfume and sluttishness. It could hardly be helped. Impressively picturesque though the town was by site and architecture, its populousness and its structural arrangement were hardly compatible with each other on terms of cleanliness. Individual families, within their own domiciles in the various "lands," might be as tidy as their cramped accommodations would permit; but the state of the common stair in each "land,"—and in the taller lands it was a dark stone "turnpike" ascending in corkscrew fashion from flat to flat,—depended on the united tastes and habits of all the families using it, and therefore on the habits and tastes of the least fastidious. It was worse in the wynds and closes. Not only did all the refuse from the habitations on both sides find its way into these, generally by the easy method of being flung down from the windows overnight; but the occupations of some of the ground-floor tenants,—butchers, candle-makers, etc.,—added contributions heterogeneously offensive. Hardly a close that had not its "midding" or "middings" at its foot or in its angles. For generations the civic authorities had been contending with this state of things and uttering periodical rebukes and edicts for cleansing. There were two kinds of occasions on which these cleansing-edicts were apt to be most stringent and

peremptory. One was the expected arrival of some illustrious stranger, or company of strangers, from England or from abroad. Then the inhabitants were reminded of the chief causes of offence among them, and put on the alert for their removal, so as not to shame the town. More strenuous still were the exertions made on any of those periodical outbreaks of the Plague, or alarms of its approach, of which we hear so frequently in the annals of Edinburgh, as of other towns, from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth. Then the authorities did bestir themselves, and the inhabitants too. But, after such occasions of spasmodic sanitary effort, there always came the relapse; and, though there was a standing order obliging each householder to see to the tidiness of his own little bit of precinct, the general apathy and obtuseness prevailed. It was providential when the heavens themselves interfered, and some extraordinary deluge of rain sent torrents down the closes.

Fortunately, the population did not need to remain within doors, or in the obscurities of the wynds and closes, more than it liked. It could pour itself out of doors into the main street; and it did so daily with a profusion beyond all modern custom. Any morning or afternoon about the year 1561 the High Street of Edinburgh, from the Castle to the Canongate, must have been one of the liveliest and most bustling thoroughfares in Europe. Need we cite, for witness, that chapter in *The Abbot* in which Scott takes occasion to describe it, just about this date, when he brings young Roland Græme for the first time into Edinburgh under the convoy of Adam Woodcock the falconer? Scott is so excellent an authority in such matters that his account may pass as hardly less

authentic than that of a contemporary. We can see, with Roland Græme, the populace "absolutely swarming like bees on the wide and stately street"; we can see the "open booths projecting on the street," with commodities of all sorts for sale, and especially Flanders cloths, tapestry, and cutlery; we can pick out in the crowd its most representative figures, such as the "gay lady, in her muffler or silken veil," stepping daintily after her "gentleman usher," or the group of burghers standing together, "with their short Flemish cloaks, wide trousers, and high-caped doublets." Nor are we much surprised when there come upon the scene the two parties of richly dressed aristocratic gallants, with their armed retinues of serving-men, meeting each other with frowns in the middle of the causeway, and immediately falling upon each other in a desperate *tulzie* or street fight, in vindication of their right of way, and of the hereditary feud between their families. Scott required such a *tulzie* for his story, and therefore brought it in where it suited him best. But, though Edinburgh was famous for its *tulzies* or causeway-fights between noblemen and lairds at feud, they were hardly everyday occurrences. Once a week or once a month was about the rate in real history. For greater authenticity, therefore, we may seek glimpses of the High Street of Old Edinburgh in Scottish literature of earlier date than the *Waverley Novels*.

The Scottish poet Dunbar has left us two pieces picturing very distinctly the Edinburgh of 1500-1513, which he knew so well. He calls it "our nobill toun," as if patriotically proud of it all in all; but it chances that in both the poems he is more sarcastic than complimentary. One is an express address of objurgation to the merchants of Edinburgh for their disgrace-

ful neglect of the "nobill toun" and its capabilities. Why, he asks, do they let its streets be overrun by beggars, so that "nane may mak progress" through them; why do they let the fairest parts be given up to "tailyouris, soutteris, and craftis vyle"; why do they let the vendors "of haddocks and of scaittis," and minstrels with but two wearisome tunes, which they repeat eternally, go everywhere bawling up and down? He complains more particularly of the High Street. He speaks of the projecting fore-stairs there as making "the houssis mirk"; he declares that at the Cross, where one should see "gold and silk," one sees nothing but "crudis and milk," and that nothing is sold in all the rest of that lower piazza but poor shellfish or common tripe and pudding; and he is positively savage on the state of the blocked isthmus between the two piazzas beside St. Giles's Church and the Tolbooth. There, where the merchants themselves most resort, and where the light is held from their Parish Kirk by the stupid obstructions which they permit, they are hampered in a malodorous honeycomb of lanes, which may suit their tastes for exchange purposes, but is hardly to their credit! To these particulars about the High Street from one of the poems we may add, from the other, linen hung out to dry on poles from the windows, cadgers of coals with wheeled carts, cadgers of other articles with creels only slung over their horses, and dogs and boys in any number running in and out among the carts and horses. All in all, Dunbar's descriptions of Edinburgh are satirical in mood, and sum themselves up in this general rebuke to the Edinburgh merchants in the first of the two poems—

Why will ye, merchants of renown,
Lat Edinburgh, your noble town,
For laik of reformatioun,
The common profit tine and fame?
Think ye nocht shame
That ony other regioun
Sall with dishonour hurt your name?

This is hardly the Edinburgh of subsequent romance, as we see it in Scott's *Abbot*; but that Scott had good warrant for what he wrote there, other than his own imagination, appears from a supplement to Dunbar furnished by Sir David Lindsay. The Edinburgh which Sir David Lindsay knew was the Edinburgh of a later generation than Dunbar's, say from 1513 to 1555; and, whether from this lapse of time or from difference in the tempers of the two poets, Sir David Lindsay's Edinburgh is liker Scott's than Dunbar's. Thus, in one poem of Lindsay's,—

Adieu, Edinburgh! thou heich triumphant town,
Within whose bounds richt blithefull have I been,
Of true merchánds the root of this regioun,
Most ready to receive Court, King, and Queen!
Thy policy and justice may be seen:
Were dévotioun, wisdom, and honesty
And credence tint, they micht be found in thee.

In another of his poems he describes Edinburgh on a gala day, when there was a procession through its High Street, such as he himself, as Lyon King of Arms, might have marshalled. The occasion was the entry into Edinburgh in May 1537 of Magdalene, daughter of Francis I. of France, the young bride of James V.; and the dirge-like form of the description,—that of an indignant address to Death,—is accounted for by the fact that the poet is looking back on the splendours of her welcome

into the Scottish capital when the too swift close of her fair young life, only a few weeks afterwards, had turned them into matter of mournful recollection,—

Thief! Saw thou nocht the great preparatives
Of Edinburgh, the noble famous town?
Thou saw the people labouring for their lives
To mak triumph with trump and clarioun:
Sic pleasour never was in this regioun
As suld have been the day of her entrace,
With great propinis given to her Grace.

Thou saw makand richt costly scaffolding,
Depaintit weell with gold and silver fine,
Ready preparit for the upsetting;
With fountains flowing water clear and wine;
Disguisit folks, like creatures divine,
On ilk scaffold, to play ane sindry story:
But all in greeting turnit thou that glory.

Thou saw there mony ane lusty fresh galland,
Weell orderit for ressaving of their Queen;
Ilk craftisman, with bent bow in his hand,
Full galyartly in short clothing of green;
The honest burgess cled thou suld have seen,
Some in scarlot, and some in claith of grain,
For till have met their Lady Soverane;

Provost, Bailies, and Lordis of the town,
The Senatours, in order consequent,
Cled into silk of purpur, black, and brown;
Syne the great Lordis of the Parliament,
With mony knichtly Baron and Banrent,
In silk and gold, in colours comfortable:
But thou, alas! all turnit into sable.

Syne all the Lordis of Religioun,
And Princes of the Priestis venerable,
Full pleasandly in their processioun,
With all the cunning Clerkis honourable:
But, theftuously, thou tyrane treasonable,
All their great solace and solemnities
Thou turnit intill duleful dirigies.

Syne, next in order, passing through the town,
Thou suld have heard the din of instruments,
Of tabron, trumpet, shalm, and clarioun,
With reird redoundand through the elements;
The Heralds, with their aweful vestiments;
With Macers, upon either of their hands,
To rule the press with burnist silver wands.

This outgoes Scott himself for the possible pomp of Old Edinburgh, and is poetically authentic. Later records, however, enable us to tone down Lindsay's description of the High Street on a great gala day by the sight of it on any ordinary market day.

Since the reign of James III., it appears, there had been an authorised distribution of the markets for different kinds of commodities through prescribed parts of the town, with the general effect that, while live stock and such bulkier commodities as wood and fodder were sold and bought only in the Grassmarket and its low-lying purlieus, the markets for all other commodities were divided mainly between the two piazzas of the High Street, each having its own "tron" or weighing apparatus. Of late years, however, there had been encroachments by each piazza on the market rights of the other, with a good deal of mutual complaint and bad feeling. We hear more particularly that, about 1559, in consequence of temporary dilapidations in the lower piazza by recent English and French ravagings of the town, the upper piazza, or High Street above the Tolbooth, had drawn into it far more than its statutory share of the market traffic. The complaints of this by the inhabitants of the lower piazza had been such that the Provost, Bailies, and Council passed an order on the subject, which may be read in Dr. Marwick's admirable Extracts from the Burgh Records. "Upoun

"consideratioun of the thraing of mercattis abone the "Over Tolbuth, and that the passage upon all mercat "dayis is sa stoppit be confluence of peple that nane "may pas by ane uther, as alsua upoun consideratioun "that the saidis landis and fore-tenementis be-eist "Nudryis Wynde [*i.e.* in the lower piazza] ar almaist "desolait and nocht inhabitit, beand the fairest and "braidest parts of the toun, for laik of merkattis and "resort of peple thairto": it was decreed that in all time coming the markets for hides, wool, and skins should be specifically in the lower piazza. For a while the order took effect; but, by the "procurment "of certane particular personis having thair landis "abone the Tolbuth," the upper piazza had again obtained the advantage. Things seem to have rectified themselves eventually; but about 1561 there was still this war of the markets between the two piazzas, with a continued overthronging of the upper.

Whether in one of the piazzas or in both, one has but to imagine the litter that would be left on market days, and to add that to the litter disgorged into the street upwards from the closes, or flung down into the street from the fore-stairs, to see that a good deal of Dunbar's earlier description must be allowed to descend through Lindsay's intermediate and more gorgeous one, as still true of the ordinary Edinburgh of the date of Queen Mary's return.

No one really knows a city who does not know it by night as well as by day. Night obscures much that day forces into notice, and invests what remains with new visual fascinations, but still so that the individuality of any city or town is preserved through its darkened hours. Every town or city has its own nocturnal character. Modern Edinburgh asserts her-

self, equally by night as by day, as the city of heights and hollows. From any elevated point in her centre or on her skirts, if you choose to place yourself there latish at night, you may look down upon rows of lamps stretched out in glittering undulation over the more level street spaces; or you may look down, in other directions, upon a succession of tiers and banks of thickly edificed darkness, punctured miscellaneously by twinkling window-lights, and descending deeply into inscrutable chasms. More familiar, and indeed so inevitable that every tourist carries it away with him as one of his most permanent recollections of Edinburgh, is the nightly spectacle from Princes Street of the northern face of the Old Town, starred irregularly with window-lights from its base to the serrated sky-line. Perhaps this is the present nocturnal aspect of Edinburgh which may most surely suggest Old Edinburgh at night three hundred years ago. For, though we must be careful, in imagining Old Edinburgh, to confine ourselves strictly and exactly to as much of the present Edinburgh as stands on the ancient site, and therefore to vote away Princes Street, the whole of the rest of the New Town, and all the other accretions, this aspect of the Old Town at night from the north cannot have changed very greatly. A belated traveller passing through the hamlets that once straggled on the grounds of the present New Town, and arriving at the edge of the North Loch, in what is now the valley of Princes Street Gardens, must have looked up across the Loch to much the same twinkling embankment of the High Street and its closes, and to much the same serrated sky-line, lowering itself eastward from the shadowy mass of the Castle Rock. If the traveller

desired admission into the town, he could not have it on this side at all, but would have to go round to some of the ports in the town-wall from its commencement at the east end of the North Loch. He might try them all in succession,—Leith Wynd Port, the Nether Bow Port, the Cowgate Port, the Kirk of Field Port, Greyfriars Port, and the West Port,—with the chance of finding that he was too late for entrance at any, and so of being brought back to his first station, and obliged to seek lodging till morning in some hamlet there, or else in the Canongate. He could perform the whole circuit of the walls, however, in less than an hour, and might have the solace, at some points of his walk, of night views down into the luminous hollows of the town, very different from his first view upward from the North Loch.

While the belated traveller was thus shut out, the inhabitants within might be passing their hours till bed-time comfortably enough, whether in the privacy of their domiciles, or in more or less noisy loitering and locomotion among the streets and wynds. If it were clear moonlight or starlight, the wynds, and especially the stately length of the High Street, would be radiantly distinct, and locomotion in them would be easy. But even in the darkest nights the townsmen were not reduced to actual groping through their town, if *ennui*, or whim, or business, or neighbourly conviviality determined them to be out of doors. Not only would they carry torches and lanterns with them for their own behoof, especially if they had to find their way down narrow closes to their homes; not only were there the gratuitous oil-lights or candle-lights from the windows of the fore-tenements in

the streets and wynds, sending down some glimmer into the streets and wynds themselves; but, by public regulation, the tenants of the fore-stair houses in the principal thoroughfares were bound to hang out, during certain hours of the evening, lamps for the guidance of those that might be passing. One has to remember, however, that people in those days kept very early hours. By ten o'clock every night Auld Reekie was mostly asleep. By that hour, accordingly, the house-lights, with some exceptions, had ceased to twinkle; and from that hour, save for bands of late roysterers here and there at close-mouths, and for the appointed night-watches on guard at the different ports, or making an occasional round with drum and whistle, silence and darkness reigned till dawn.

The Provost of Edinburgh in 1561 was Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie, a well-known laird of the great kin of the Angus Douglases. He had held the office continuously by annual election since 1553, with only two years of break. The four Bailies under him, answering to the Aldermen of an English town, were David Forster, Robert Ker, Alexander Home, and Allan Dickson, all merchant-burgesses. It would be possible, I believe, even at this distance of time, to give the names of as many as 1000 or 1500 other persons of the population, with particulars about not a few of them. In a town of such a size all the principal inhabitants must have been perfectly well acquainted with each other, and must have been known, by figure and physiognomy at least, to the rest of the community. We will name at present but one other inhabitant of the Edinburgh of 1561, who must have been about the best known of all. This was John Knox, the chief minister of the town,

and the stated preacher, always on Sundays and often on week-days, in the great Church of St. Giles. His house, or the house of which he occupied a portion, if not then that very conspicuous projecting house of three storeys in the Nether Bow which visitors to Edinburgh now go to see as having been his, was certainly somewhere in that neighbourhood. From this point of what we have called the lower piazza of the High Street there is a direct view upwards to St. Giles's Church, about 300 yards distant; and the walk in the other direction, down the Canongate, to Holyrood Abbey and Palace, is perhaps about twice as much. Divide a half-mile of sloping street into three equal parts, and Knox's residence in Edinburgh, the house in which he sat on the day of young Queen Mary's return among her Scottish subjects in August 1561, is to be imagined as just one-third down such a slope from the great Church of St. Giles, with the other two-thirds descending thence continuously, houses on both sides, to the Palace in which Mary had taken up her abode. Mary and Knox were to meet ere long.

ROBERT ROLLOCK AND THE BEGINNINGS OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY[1]

The University of Edinburgh dates its existence from the year 1582, when James VI. was sixteen years of age and had been for fifteen years King of Scotland. Till that time there had been but three universities in Scotland,—that of St. Andrews (1413), that of Glasgow (1454), and that of King's College, Aberdeen (1494). The want of a university in the metropolis had been long felt. Especially after the Reformation, people residing in or near Edinburgh had begun to think it a hardship that they had to send their sons over to St. Andrews, or away to Glasgow, or as far off as Aberdeen, to complete their education. Why should not Edinburgh have a university for itself? The Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh were particularly zealous in the project; and, as far back as the reign of Mary, they had, with the Queen's sanction, taken some steps towards carrying the project into effect. They had fixed on the site of the intended new College. It was the site on which the University now stands, but was then a kind of suburb of gardens and straggling buildings, partly old church edifices, known by the

[1] Written, and in part delivered, as an Introductory Lecture to the Class of English Literature in the University of Edinburgh in the Session 1867-8.

name of St. Mary in the Fields, or, more shortly, Kirk o' Field. They had purchased a certain right of property here; and here, accordingly, amid the old tenements that have been long swept away, as well as in the gardens and bits of green field which covered what is now the thoroughfare of South Bridge Street, we are to fancy the Edinburgh magistrates and ministers of Queen Mary's reign, and perhaps John Knox himself, pottering about sometimes in their afternoon walks, looking at this and that, and anticipating the College that was to be established. But years passed on, and there were difficulties in the way. Funds were wanting, and there was strenuous opposition from the already existing universities; and, before any college-building could arise on the site of Kirk o' Field, that site had been made unexpectedly memorable by one of the ghastliest of deeds. It was close to what is now the south side of the University quadrangle that there stood the fatal tenement in which Darnley was lodged on his return from Glasgow when he was recovering from the small-pox, and the explosion of which by gunpowder, on the night between the 9th and 10th of February 1567, hurled his corpse and that of his servant over the adjacent town-wall, and left Mary a widow. With other thoughts, therefore, than of the intended seat of learning, for the uses of which the ground had been partly purchased when this tragedy blackened it, must the citizens of Edinburgh for many a year afterwards have sauntered hereabouts in the evenings. But shocks of the kind are transient; and, when, in the quieter though still agitated days of King James, certain liberal citizens began to move anew for the foundation of the much-needed

university,—chief among whom were Mr. James Lawson, Knox's successor as minister of Edinburgh, Mr. William Little, afterwards Lord Provost, and his brother, Mr. Clement Little, an Edinburgh lawyer,—there was no dream of any other site for it than that which had been already chosen. With creditable quickness the Town Council proceeded to convert the long-cherished design into a reality. Masons and carpenters were set to work; and, what with the patching-up of old buildings already on the ground, what with the erection of frugal additions, a kind of make-shift beginning of a College was at last knocked together. A charter from King James, dated "Stirling, 14th April 1582," made all right. It empowered the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Edinburgh to found and gradually complete within the city what should be to all intents and purposes a true University, or *Studium Generale*. King James, as has been said, was then still in his boyhood. His unhappy mother was in the fourteenth year of her captivity in England.

A material fabric for lodging the University of Edinburgh having been thus roughly provided, all that was further necessary was to procure teachers. There are now between thirty and forty chairs in the University of Edinburgh; but it is not to be imagined that the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh had to make that number of appointments in 1582 in order that their new College might begin operations. They were content with a much smaller equipment. They merely looked about for one qualified man to begin with; and, when they had got *him*, they could consider the institution fairly launched. This may require a little explanation.

The Charter of the new College contained provisions for its being eventually a university of complete dimensions, with not only a General Faculty or Faculty of Arts (then usually called the Faculty of Philosophy), but also the three special or professional Faculties of Theology, Law, and Medicine. But, though the Magistrates and Town Council looked forward, no doubt, to the attainment of this perfection by the University at some time or other, they were not so ambitious at first, and, indeed, had to accommodate their aims to the meagreness of their means. They thought that, if they succeeded in founding the general faculty, or Faculty of Arts, the most important part of their work would be done, and the rest might gradually follow. They gave all their attention at first, therefore, to the one Faculty of Arts. To set up this Faculty alone would, according to recent ideas of what is essential to its equipment, require at least seven appointments. Since 1858 the professorships of Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Logic and Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy, and Rhetoric and English Literature have been, as it were, the Seven Golden Candlesticks of the Arts Faculty in the University of Edinburgh,—the seven chairs in that faculty privileged coequally above the rest in the curriculum for graduation. In those old days, however, there was no notion that even as many as seven separate candlesticks were needed. Latin was pre-eminent as the *sine qua non* for all the rest. It was the language in which all the formal instruction within every university was then given, and with which, so far as concerned the power of understanding it, speaking it, and to some extent writing it, all students were supposed to be

acquainted before they commenced their university course. Further, in the other subjects, which were all taught through this medium of Latin, there was no such division of labour as at present. Mathematics and Natural Philosophy had not then attained such dimensions in the world of knowledge, nor were Moral Philosophy and Rhetoric so extricated from Logic and Metaphysics, nor was proficiency in any or all of those subjects deemed so incompatible with a competent knowledge of Greek, but that one and the same professor could be expected to take students through the whole series of studies by himself. *Now* it would be but a sad jumble of superficialities that would result from such a system of individual professorships of everything; but in those days the *totum scibile* had not come to be so monstrous or heterogeneous an aggregate but that it might be supposed capable of being carried with tolerable compactness under one able man's hat, and of being taught by such a man more or less effectively by means of a series of established Latin text-books. The supposition, though absurd enough even then, was the less absurd because the subjects were made to follow each other in a regular order through a university course of four years. The professor began in his first year with the simpler subjects, and then carried the same students, in their second, third, and fourth years, through the more difficult subjects, until, at the end of the fourth year, he had fitted them for their graduation, or, as it was called, their "laureation," in Arts. By this method, it will be seen, the number of Arts professors in every university required to be but four at the most,—each professor making his four years' round with the same students till he had

seen them made Masters of Arts, and then returning to receive a new class of freshmen or entrants with whom to repeat his round. In fact, in each of the already established universities of Scotland there *were* four such principal Arts professors, or Philosophy professors. In some universities, it is true, there were special professors in addition, relieving the general professors of particular kinds of work; but the four general or circulating professors were the essential complement of the Arts Faculty. They were called "regents," by way of distinction.

It will be obvious now that, though the newly-founded University of Edinburgh required at least four Philosophy professors or regents before even its Arts Faculty could be considered fully equipped, yet one regent was enough to start with. All that was necessary was that one fit professor should be ready to receive the first set of students that should present themselves. For the first year this single professor could do the whole of the University work; and only when he had carried his students through the first year of their course, and had to pass on to the second year with them, would it be necessary to appoint a second regent, to follow him with the new set of students who would then come to the University doors. The third regent might be appointed the year after that, and the fourth not till a year later.

All this the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh, anxious for the success of the new institution, but bound to be careful of expenses, had calculated beforehand. It was, of course, a most serious question with them who should be the first regent. No one could tell how much depended on

that. A bad appointment might wreck the University at the outset.

Fortunately, through the recommendation of that same Mr. James Lawson, Knox's successor in the ministry of Edinburgh, who had already had so much to do with the founding of the University, the Magistrates and Town Council selected a man whose appointment neither the City nor the University had any cause afterwards to regret. This was Mr. Robert Rollock,—the Rev. Robert Rollock would be now the designation,—then one of the Philosophy professors in the University of St. Andrews. He was a Stirlingshire man by birth, had been educated at St. Andrews, was twenty-eight years of age, and had already won good opinions among those who knew him. A deputation having been sent to St. Andrews to invite him to the new post, he came to Edinburgh in September 1583 to offer himself for inspection; and on the 14th of that month an agreement was signed between him and the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council. Rollock, on his part, agreed to "enter to the Colledge newly foundit within "the burgh," and to "exerce the office of the Regent "of the said Colledge, in instructioun, governament, and "correctioun of the youth and persones whilk sall be "committed to his chairge," faithfully attending always to the rules and injunctions to be given him by the Provost, Bailies, and Council; "for the whilkis causis" they, on their part, "binds and oblesis thame and "their successoris thankfullie to content and pay to the "said Mr. Robert the soume of fortie pundis usual "money of this realme, at twa termis in the yeir, "Candlemes and Lammes, be twa equall portionis, "and sall susteine him and ane servand in their ordinar

" expensis. . . . Attour [*i.e.* moreover] the said Mr. " Robert sall repare and have, for his labouris to be " takin in instructing everie bairne repairing to the " said Colledge, yearly, as followis: to wit, fra the " bairnes inhabitants of the said burgh, fortie schillings, " and fra the bairnes of uthers, nocht inhabitants therein, " three pundis, or mair as the bairnes parentis please " to bestow of their liberalitie." Further prospects of remuneration and promotion were held forth to Mr. Rollock, and there was every disposition to make him comfortable.

An original portrait of Rollock now hangs in the Senate Hall of Edinburgh University. It is but a poor specimen of the painter's art, and it does not suggest that Mr. Rollock can have been an Apollo. It exhibits, however, a very distinct physiognomy,—a physiognomy so distinct, so unlike anybody's else, that, were Mr. Rollock to reappear any afternoon now in the Canongate or in Princes Street, there would be no difficulty in recognising him. The complexion, as the portrait tells us, and as we learn from a contemporary biographic sketch of him, was ruddy, or ruddy with a mixture of white (*colore rubido cui candor quidam admistus*); and the hair and beard,—both cut short, so as to give a character of round compactness to the head,—were of reddish hue (*comâ subrufâ*). The biographic sketch, which is by one who knew him well, adds that he was of middle stature and of rather weakly health, and bears testimony to his piety, conscientiousness, peaceful disposition, and pleasant sociability.

It was on the 1st of October 1583 that this round-headed, reddish-haired man, of Stirlingshire birth, but of St. Andrews training, opened the

first session of the University of Edinburgh by an address delivered in the public hall of the new premises in the presence of a crowded audience of citizens and others. Next day, when he received the students who came to enroll themselves in the first class in the new University, their number, what with those supplied by Edinburgh itself, what with those attracted from other parts of the country, was found to be far greater than had been anticipated. Very soon, however, it appeared that this was not altogether a cause for congratulation. The motley body of the entrants had not been manipulated by Rollock for more than a week or two when he had to marshal them into two divisions. A considerable number had broken down in Latin,—were found to be so ill-grounded in that indispensable preliminary that it was hopeless to go on with them as members of the first University class proper, the teaching of which had to be through the medium of Latin. To meet this exigency Rollock proposed to the Town Council that they should at once appoint a second regent, and that this regent should have committed to his charge all who were backward in Latin, to be formed into a preparatory or Humanity class, and drilled as such for a year, while he himself should go on with the others in the first proper Arts or Philosophy class. Were that done, then, next year, when he himself should be carrying on his students into the second class, the other regent might form those that had been kept back, and qualified newcomers with them, into a properly sequent first class; and so the routine would be established. The advice was adopted; and, on Rollock's recommendation, the person chosen to be Humanity teacher in the mean-

time, and second regent in regular course, was a Mr. Duncan Nairne, a young man from Glasgow University. Thus all was arranged; and the work of the first session of the University of Edinburgh proceeded,—Rollock teaching his "Bajans," and Nairne following with the ragged troop whom he was working up in Latin to fit them for the "Bajan" class of next year.

The "session" in each of the Scottish universities extended then over ten, or even eleven, months of every year, *i.e.* from the beginning of October to, or well into, August. The practice was for the students, or a proportion of them, to reside within the University walls; and, though this practice soon fell into disuse in Edinburgh, it held good at first so far that at least some of the students were boarded and lodged in some rough fashion within the College. The original regulation also was that students should wear academic costume; but against this regulation Edinburgh opinion seems from the first to have set its face most determinedly. It was never really obeyed.

The infant years of the University were years of trial and rough usage. In the jars between the different political factions round the young King, and struggling for the possession of him, the infant institution was much shaken and disturbed. The Magistrates and Town Council, however, did their best; and Rollock was persevering and judicious. The severest interruption to his labours came in his second session, or 1584-5. That session had been begun with good prospects, the property of the College having been increased by a royal grant, and by a collection of about 300 volumes bequeathed by Mr. Clement Little to

form the nucleus of a college library. Rollock was proceeding, accordingly, with his second or semi class; and Nairne, having worked up the laggards by this time, was teaching his first class of Bajans. But in the course of the winter Edinburgh was visited by that scourge, "The Plague," of the frequency of the visits of which in those times, and their paralysing effects on industry of all kinds, no one can be aware who is not versed in the old annals of English and Scottish cities. In May 1585, most of the students having already dispersed, it was necessary to stop the session entirely. This would not have mattered so much, had not the alarm of the Plague continued into the following session. That session, the third in the history of the University, ought to have begun in October 1585; at which time, as Rollock would then have been carrying his students into their third or bachelor class, and Nairne would have been carrying *his* into their second or semi class, a third regent would have had to be appointed, to undertake the new class of freshmen. But it was not till February 1586, or four months after the proper beginning of the session, that the College was reopened, and then it was deemed best not to attempt a new Bajan class at all that year, but simply to go on with the semies and bachelors. Even in this arrangement there came a difficulty. Scarcely were the classes begun when the promising young Mr. Duncan Nairne died, and, in order that the semi class might be carried on at all, the Town Council had to elect a professor in his room. They chose Mr. Charles Lumsden, a young man who had been one of Rollock's pupils at St. Andrews. The services of this, the third regent or Professor of Philosophy in the University, did not, however, outlast the

remainder of the session in which he had been appointed. A College professorship was not then a post of such attraction that it could be thought strange that Mr. Lumsden should resign it when, in the following October, he received a call to be minister of Duddingston parish. By his resignation at that moment, however, the College would have been left crippled, had not two new regents been at once appointed. These new regents, chosen by competitive trial out of six candidates, were Mr. Adam Colt and Mr. Alexander Scrimgeour. The last of these, Scrimgeour, took charge of the new class of entrants or Bajans; as there had been no class of Bajans in the former year, the semi class was this year a blank; the former pupils of Lumsden and Nairne, now in the third or bachelor class, were entrusted to Mr. Colt; and Rollock himself, proceeding with the pupils who had already been continuously in his charge for three years, carried them through the last or magistrand class.

In August 1587, six months after the execution of Queen Mary at Fotheringay, the fourth session of Edinburgh University was brought to a close by the first act of laureation or graduation in its annals. Forty-seven of Rollock's pupils, who had remained with him steadily through the entire four years, were then made masters of arts,—a larger number than was to be seen at any subsequent graduation for more than half a century. The signatures of the forty-seven are still to be seen in the preserved graduation-book, appended to a copy of that Scottish Confession of the Reformed Faith to which it was the rule that all graduates should swear everlasting fidelity. Several of the names are those of persons afterwards of some note in Scotland.

To three of them is affixed in the graduation-book, in later handwriting, the dreadful word *Apostata*, signifying that those three disciples of Rollock afterwards apostatised from the Protestant religion.

Having thus followed Rollock through one complete cycle of his regency or professorship in Arts, one would like to know something as to the nature and methods of his teaching. On this head the information is as follows:—He began, as we have seen, by testing his students in the indispensable Latin. But, though ability to read ordinary Latin authors, to write in Latin, and also to speak Latin in some fashion and understand spoken Latin, were prerequisites to his course, the business of that course itself included necessarily much reading in particular Latin classics, whether for their matter or for their style. Very soon in his first class, however, he attacked Greek, teaching it from the grammar upwards, until easy Greek authors could be read. Greek was continued, for its own sake, into the second and third years of the course; but the chief business of those years, and of the fourth, was "Philosophy," as divided into Logic, Ethics, and Physics. In each of these departments the philosophical teaching consisted chiefly of expositions of Aristotle. Whether in the original Greek, or, as is more probable, in Latin versions, Rollock, we are expressly told, read Aristotle daily with his pupils, beginning with the *Organon Logicum*, and then going through the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Physics*. The *Physics* came probably in the last year, and in this year also (for mathematics and physical science were then usually delayed till the end) certain additions to Aristotle: to wit, the principles of Arithmetic, a sketch of the Anatomy of the human body, Astronomy as taught in the then standard

treatise of Joannes a Sacro Bosco *De Sphæra*, and finally Geography. Conceive the routine so sketched; conceive the steady plodding on day after day, for some hours every day, through four sessions of ten or eleven months each; and conceive also the disputations in Latin among the students themselves every Saturday, and the express catechisings of them in religion on Sundays: and you will have an idea of what it was to be under Rollock in the first years of the University of Edinburgh.

A still more minute account of what constituted the curriculum of study in the Faculty of Arts during the first age of the University is furnished by an abstract of the "Order of Discipline" in the University, drawn up in the year 1628. One cannot be sure that in every particular this "Order of Discipline" accords with what had been the practice of Rollock; but, as the abstract professes to be mainly a digest of rules and customs that had been already in force, it probably describes substantially the scheme of teaching introduced by Rollock and bequeathed by him to his successors. The scheme may be tabulated thus:—

First Year: *Latin, Greek, and the Elements of Logic*—(1) *Latin:* Exercises in turning English into Latin and in translation from Latin; with readings in Latin authors, chiefly Cicero. There seems also to have been practice in Latin verse-making. (2) *Greek:* The Greek Grammar of Clenardus; Readings in the New Testament, in the Orations of Isocrates, and, for poetry, in Phocylides, Hesiod, and Homer; also translation of Latin themes into Greek, and of Greek into Latin. Passages of the Greek authors read were got by heart, and publicly recited on Saturdays. (3) *Logic:* This was reserved till near the end of the session, and Ramus was the author used.—There were disputations on Saturdays, and catechisings on Sundays.

Second Year: *Recapitulation of previous studies, with Rhetoric, Logic, and Arithmetic*—(1) *Recapitulation:* For the first month, with a final examination in Greek. (2) *Rhetoric:* Talæus's Rhetoric (a

short and very flimsy compend on the figures of speech, with instructions in delivery), and portions of other manuals, such as Cassander's *Rhetoric* and Aphthonius's *Progymnasmata* (a collection of specimens of Greek composition to illustrate various styles); also oratorical exercises by the students themselves. (3) *Logic*: Perphyry's Introduction to Aristotle's *Organon*, and then, in the *Organon* itself, the Categories, the Prior Analytics, and portions of the Topics and the Sophistics. (4) *Arithmetic*: towards the end of the session.—Disputations and declamations on Saturdays, and catechisings on Sundays.

THIRD YEAR: *Recapitulation of previous studies, with Hebrew Grammar, Logic, Ethics, and Physical Science*—(1) *Recapitulation*: This went back upon the Greek, and included examinations in Rhetoric and in Logical Analysis. (2) *Hebrew Grammar*: taught apparently from the beginning of the session. (3) *Logic*: The two Books of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*. (4) *Ethics*: The first, second, half of the third, and the fourth and fifth Books of Aristotle's *Ethics*. (5) *Physical Science*: Aristotle's *Acroamatics*, taught partly textually, partly in compend, followed, at the close of the session, by a descriptive sketch of Human Anatomy.—Disputations on prescribed theses on Saturdays, and theological instruction on Sundays.

FOURTH YEAR: *Recapitulation of previous studies, with Astronomy, Cosmography, and other portions of Physics, and Disputations and other preparations for the Laureation.* Among the books used in this year were the *Sphæra* of Joannes a Sacro Bosco, the books of Aristotle *De Cælo*, *De Ortu*, *De Meteoris*, and *De Anima*, and Hunter's *Cosmography*. Atlases and the celestial globe were also in requisition, and the most notable constellations were pointed out in the heavens themselves. But much of the work of this session consisted in logical disputations in the evenings, whether among the magistrands, or between them and the third year's men.—On Sundays, instruction in Dogmatic and Polemical Theology.

To return to Rollock personally:—We have spoken of him hitherto as only the first regent or Arts professor of Edinburgh University. In reality, however, since February 1586, when he was in his third session and had Nairne as his single fellow-regent, he had borne, along with his regency, the higher dignity of the PRINCIPALSHIP,—the Town Council having concluded that the time had come for the institution of such an office in the University, and for Rollock's promotion

to it. Accordingly, when Rollock had the satisfaction of seeing the forty-seven students who had gone through their full four years' curriculum with him made Masters of Arts, he was not only senior Regent, but also Principal of the University, with a right of superintendence over Colt and Scrimgeour, the other two regents. But no sooner had this first Edinburgh graduation taken place than there was a further change. Rollock, satisfied with having taken one class of students through the full course of four years, resigned his regency or Arts professorship, in order to become Professor of Divinity. As it was desirable that those of the new graduates and others who might be going forward to the Church should have the means of a theological education within Edinburgh, this was a natural arrangement. It amounted to the institution, though on a small scale, of a Theological Faculty in the University, in addition to the general Faculty of Arts or Philosophy. The Theological Faculty was represented solely by Rollock, who was also Principal of the University; while the Arts or Philosophical Faculty was represented for the time in Colt, Scrimgeour, and a third regent, Mr. Philip Hislop, one of Rollock's recent graduates, appointed to the place which Rollock had just left vacant. In 1589, however, Mr. Charles Ferme, also one of Rollock's graduates, was added to the staff of regents, so as to complete the number of four, necessary for the full conduct of the Arts classes.

No need to narrate here the rest of Rollock's life in detail. Enough if we imagine him going on for ten years more in the exercise of the double duties of his Professorship of Theology and his Principalship in the infant University. As Professor of Theology, he

may be said to have founded the Divinity School of Edinburgh. He trained up assiduously, not only by his lectures on Dogmatic and Polemical Theology, but also by his personal influence, the first ecclesiastics whom the University of Edinburgh gave to the Kirk of Scotland. Some of these attained subsequent distinction, and, remembering Rollock with reverence, carried his name into the next generation. Nor was his Principalship a sinecure. He visited the Philosophy classes, gave special lectures to them on Theology, and kept them and the regents to their work. Add to this much exertion beyond the bounds of the University. For a time he delivered Sunday evening sermons to crowded congregations in the East Kirk of St. Giles, by way of volunteer assistance to the four city ministers; and, latterly, when these four were increased to eight, and a division of the city-pastorate was made into eight districts or parishes, the full ministerial care of one of these city-charges was entrusted to Rollock. It was an anxious time, too, in the politics of the Kirk. King James had begun those efforts of his for the subversion of the Presbyterian constitution of the Kirk, as it had been established by statute in 1592, in which he was to persevere so unflinchingly through the remainder of his resident reign in Scotland, though it was not till he removed to England, and could act upon his native kingdom from the vantage-ground of his acquired English sovereignty, that the results were fully seen in the abolition of the Presbyterian constitution of the Kirk altogether and the substitution of Episcopacy. Already in Rollock's time all Scotland was in anxious agitation in consequence of this anti-presbyterian policy of the King and the vehement resistance to it

offered by the majority of the Scottish clergy and of the Scottish people. Rollock himself, as a public man and leading Edinburgh minister, had to take his part in the controversy. It was a mild part, it would seem, and not entirely satisfactory to the more resolute Presbyterian spirits, but truthful and characteristic. Without following him, however, over this dangerous ground, farther than to say that he was Moderator of the General Assembly held at Dundee in 1597, at which the King was present in person and there were some not unimportant attempts at a compromise, let us pass on to the year 1599, the last year but one of the sixteenth century.

Rollock was then in his forty-fourth year. He could look back on his services in connection with Edinburgh University as the most important work of his life. He had seen fifteen sessions of that University begun and ended, during four of which he had been senior regent or Arts professor, and during the remaining eleven Principal and Professor of Theology. He had seen eleven graduations and a total of 284 Edinburgh Masters of Arts sent forth by these graduations into the world. The University, it is true, remained still but a fragment of what a complete university ought to have been. It contained as yet no Faculty of Law and no Faculty of Medicine. For education in these professions Scottish students had still to resort to foreign universities, as indeed they had to do for more than a century yet to come. But it was something to have established a Theological Faculty and a Faculty of Arts. The Theological Faculty was still represented entire in Rollock's own person; but in the Arts Faculty, on which the University depended most, he had seen thirteen regents after himself

appointed. The tenure of office of most of these had been vexatiously short, drawn off as they had been by the more tempting emoluments of parish-charges and the like; but the four who were now in office as regents, —Mr. Henry Charteris, Mr. Charles Ferme, Mr. John Adamson, and Mr. William Craig,—were all graduates of the University itself, and therefore all Rollock's own men. Moreover, the Arts Faculty had just been increased by the institution of a separate Professorship of Humanity, distinct from the four rotating regencies. To this professorship, the first holder of which was a certain excellent Mr. John Ray, fell a part of the work that had formerly been assigned to the regents of the first and second classes: viz. instruction mainly in Latin, but also in elementary Greek and the rudiments of rhetoric. Such was the staff of Edinburgh University as Rollock left it. Though yet but in the prime of manhood, he had been long in ill-health, and was now suffering from a painful and incurable disease. There are affectionate details of his death-bed doings and sayings: how he sent messages to the King, how the ministers and leading citizens of Edinburgh visited him, what advices he gave them, what pious ejaculations he uttered, and how, in especial, he spoke of the University of his love, and recommended it to the care of those who had the power to promote its interests. On the 9th of February 1599, the sixteenth session of the University being then in progress, he breathed his last. There was a great concourse of citizens of all ranks at his funeral, and all over Scotland the rumour ran that the nation was poorer by the loss of the eminent Rollock. Verses in Latin, Greek, and English, by old pupils and others, were showered upon his grave. He left a widow, whom the Magistrates

and Town Council of Edinburgh pensioned; and a daughter, posthumously born, was also provided for. In deference to his dying injunctions, the Town Council appointed Mr. Henry Charteris, his favourite pupil, and then one of the regents, to be his successor in the principalship and in the professorship of Divinity.

Looked back upon now through the dense radiance of the subsequent history of the University of Edinburgh, expanded as that University has been in the course of centuries into its present four-facultied completeness, each faculty of larger dimensions than Rollock could ever have dreamt of, and each with its memories of scores or hundreds of more or less shining celebrities that have belonged to it in past generations, Rollock himself, it must be admitted, dwindles into a mere telescopic star. That he is remembered at all now is due mainly to the fact that he was the first president of one of the most important institutions of the Scottish nation, and charged with the affairs of that institution in its struggling commencement, its "day of small things." This in itself would be something. Many men have merited well of society simply because they have performed diligently the routine duties of the office they chanced to hold, and so have woven something of their own personality, though it may be hardly distinguishable afterwards, into the context of passing affairs and exigencies. Is this all, however, that we can say of Rollock? Not quite. Though the best of him is probably imbedded in the beginnings of the University of Edinburgh, and much of that even in the unrecorded beginnings, he *has* left some memorials of himself besides. His writings, all or nearly all of a theological nature, some published

during his life, and others edited after his death by admiring friends, are so considerable in bulk that even the selection of them reprinted by the Wodrow Society fills two thick volumes. The more important and formal of them were dogmatic treatises or analytical Latin commentaries on portions of Scripture, some of which were of sufficient ability, after their kind, to have won recognition from Beza and other foreign theologians. More interesting, however, now are the specimens that remain of Rollock's popular sermons in the vernacular English, or rather the vernacular Scots, of his day. Two extracts from one of these sermons will enable us to know Rollock somewhat more intimately, and will give an idea at the same time of the tastes of the Edinburgh folks of those days in the matter of pulpit oratory.

Understand that the text of the discourse is *2 Cor. v. 1, 2*, running thus in the old version then in use: "For we knaw that, gif our earthly hous of this "tabernacle be destroyit, we have a buylding given "of God; that is, a house nocht made with hands, "bot eternall in the heavens. For therefore we "sigh, desiring to be clothed with our hous whilk "is from heaven." The thoughts suggested by this text being those of the evanescence of the present life and the aspiration after another life of higher expansion, Rollock's handling of them takes this form:—

"The Apostle having spoken this, that his eye was set on that hevinly glory, it micht have been said, 'Thou settis thine eye upon ane life above; bot tak heid, Paul! Thou sall die in the mean time; is not life and deith twa contrares? thou mon die, and that body of thine mon be dissolvit. Luikis thou ever to rise again? thinkis thou any other thing bot to be disappointed of life? Luikis thou that that body of thine, being dissolvit in dust, sall rise again

to glory?' This is ane fair tentatioun, and sundry thinkis efter this maner. . . . Leirne ane lesson here. Ye see, while ane man is luiking to hevin, he will not be without tentatioun,—nay, not Paul himself, nor nae other man nor woman that hes their conversatioun in hevin. And the special tentatioun of him wha wald fain have life is deith, and the dreidful sicht of deith; and deith is ever in his eye. He was never born bot deith will tempt him, deith will be terrible to flesh and blude; and, when he is luiking up to that licht and glory in hevin, it will come in betwixt his eye and the sicht of hevin, as it were ane terrible black cloud, and some time will twin [sunder] him and that licht of hevin. As, when ane man is luiking up to the sun, ane cloud will come in on ane suddenty and tak the sicht of the sun frae him, sae when ane man is luiking up to the Sun of Richteousness, Christ Jesus, that cloud of deith will come in and cleik [catch] the sicht of Christ frae him. This is our estate here, and there is nane acquainted with hevinly things bot he will find this in experience as Paul did. But what is the remedy? In the first word of the text that we have read he says 'we *knaw*,' that is, 'we are assured'; for the word imparts ane full assurance, and faith, and ane full persuasion. Then the remedy aganis this tentatioun of deith is only faith, ane full persuasion and licht in the mind of the knawledge of God in the face of Christ, with ane gripping and apprehension thereof. This is the only remedy."

"Thou mon have ane warrand of thy salvation in this life, or ellis I assure thee in the name of God thou sall never get to hevin. It is ane strait way to come to hevin, and it is wonder hard to get the assurance of it: it is nae small matter to get ane assurance of life everlasting efter death. Then luik what warrandis this man Paul had, that thou may preis to have the like. The first ground of his assurance is in this second verse. 'For,' says he, 'this cause we sigh, desiring to be clothed' (to put on as it were ane garment). Wherewith? 'With our house whilk is frae hevin.' Thir [these] are his wordis. Then his first warrand and ground of his assurance is ane *desire* of that samin glory. What sort of desire? Ane *earnest* desire, with siching and sobbing; not ane cauld desire, but day and nicht crying and sobbing for life. Trowis thou sae easily to get hevin that can never say earnestly in thy heart, 'God give me that hevinly life!' Na, thou will be disappointed; it is the *violent* that enters in hevin (Matt. xi. 12), as ye will see ane man violently thring [squeeze] in at ane yett [gate]. Thou that wald gang to hevin, make thee for thringing through while [until] all thy guttis be almaist thrustit out. Paul, in the viii. chapter to the Romans, the 22 and 23 verses, usis thir argumentis aganis those wickit men that cannot sich for hevin. First he takis his argument frae the elementis, the senseless and dumb creaturis, wha sobbis and groanis for the revelation of the sonnis of God. O miserable man, the eirth sall condemn

thee; the flure thou sittis on is siching, and wald fain heave that carcase of thine to hevin. The waters, the air, the hevinis, all siching for that last deliverance, the glory apperteinis to *thee*; and yet *thou* is lauchand. What sall betide thee?"

There is evidence here that Rollock cannot have been merely a stiff scholastic and pedagogue, but was a man of some real, if coarsish, fervour of heart, of whom it might be expected that he would have the power on occasion of putting his hand on the shoulders of any promising youth among his pupils, and doing him good by some earnest words of moral and spiritual stimulus. On the whole, however, the impression from the sermons and the other writings is that he was by no means a man of such extraordinary calibre intellectually as it was desirable, and perhaps possible, that the University of Edinburgh should have had for its first regent and principal, the shaper of its methods and its tendencies from the outset. High forms of study and speculation were then asserting themselves in the intellectual world of the British Islands, the influence of which had never reached Rollock, or to which, in his place and circumstances, he remained necessarily impervious. His administration of the University could only be according to the lights in which he had himself been educated, and which he brought with him from St. Andrews. What if the Town Council of Edinburgh, instead of sending to St. Andrews for Rollock to be the first head of the new University, had invited their neighbour, Napier of Merchiston, to the post? He was Rollock's senior by five years, the one man in all Scotland supremely fitted for the post; and, as he was to outlive Rollock eighteen years, how different might have been the infancy of the University had *he* been in Rollock's place! But

Napier was a layman and a laird; and the heavens would have fallen on the Edinburgh Town Council of 1583, as indeed they would have fallen on any subsequent Edinburgh Town Council till 1858, if they had thought of choosing any one but an ecclesiastic for the University Principalship. Besides, it is possible that the Laird of Merchiston, a man of many acres, and the owner and inhabitant of one of the finest turreted mansions near Edinburgh, would have regarded the offer as a joke.

It is in accordance with our estimate of Rollock all in all that, though, among the students sent forth from the University of Edinburgh during his Principalship, there were some who distinguished themselves subsequently by their force and hard-headedness in the routine affairs of the Scottish Kirk and State, we do not find any among them whom the historian of the higher thought and literature of Britain cares to remember now. Among the 284 Masters of Arts who left the University before Rollock died, the most memorable are perhaps these: Henry Charteris and Patrick Sands, pupils of Rollock's own regency, and his successors in the principalship; Alexander Gibson of Durie, afterwards a judge of the Court of Session; James Sandilands, afterwards commissary of Aberdeen; Thomas Hope, afterwards Sir Thomas Hope, and of celebrity as a lawyer and as King's Advocate; David Calderwood, the Presbyterian historian of the Kirk; and Robert Boyd of Trochrig, sometime minister in France, and afterwards Principal successively of the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. To these may be added, as memorable on another ground, John Ruthven, Earl of Gowrie, and his brother Alexander Ruthven, the two young chiefs or victims of the

mysterious Gowrie conspiracy of 1600. The elder brother, a favourite of Rollock's, was a graduate of 1593, and the younger graduated in 1598. Other names of some interest to the Scottish literary antiquarian may be found in the list of the Edinburgh graduates of Rollock's time, but hardly one now interesting to the general British muses. But, indeed, Scotland had then entered on a period of her history during which the higher and more meditative muses found themselves dismissed from her territory for a while. Precisely at the time when the University of Edinburgh was founded, the age of Scotland's richest outburst in all forms of a thoroughly native literature had come to an end,—closed, we may say, by the deaths of Knox and Buchanan, save that in Napier of Merchiston there was one peculiar survivor. From that date onwards through the whole of the seventeenth century the energies of Scotland were to be locked up all but continually and exclusively in one protracted business of political and ecclesiastical controversy. From that date, accordingly, the successive batches of graduates sent forth from the four Scottish Universities,—or rather, we should now say, from the *five* Scottish Universities, for the University of Marischal College, Aberdeen, was added as a fifth in 1593,—were absorbed, as clerics, lawyers, soldiers, and what not, into the service of a troubled social element requiring labours that left little sap in them for literary delights or for purely speculative exertions. Exceptions, of course, there are; and the two most notable of these belong to the University of Edinburgh. Drummond of Hawthornden was a graduate of that University in 1605, six years after Rollock's death. Robert Leighton, so dear to Coleridge as one of the finest Platonic spirits

among the British theologians of the seventeenth century, was an Edinburgh graduate of 1631, and was Rollock's sixth successor in the Principalship of the University, and known for ten years in that capacity before they induced him to become Bishop and Archbishop.

KING JAMES'S FAREWELL TO HOLYROOD[1]

It is a Saturday evening in Holyrood,—the evening of Saturday, the 26th of March 1603. All is dull and sleepy within the Palace, the King and Queen having retired after supper, and the lights in the apartments now going out one by one. Suddenly, hark! what noise is that without? There is first a battering at the gate, and then the sound of a horse's hoofs in the courtyard, and of a bustling of the palace servants round some late arriver. It is the English Sir Robert Cary, brother of Lord Hunsdon. He had left London between nine and ten o'clock in the forenoon of the 24th; he had ridden as never man rode before, spur and gallop, spur and gallop, all the way, through that day and the next and the next, the two intervening nights hardly excepted; and here he is at Holyrood on the evening of the third day,—an incredible ride! His horse, the last he has been on, is taken from him all a-foam; and he himself, his head bloody with a wound received by a fall and a kick from the horse in the last portion of his journey, makes his way staggeringly, under escort, into the aroused King's presence. Throwing himself on his knees before his half-dressed Majesty, he can but pant out, in his fatigue and excitement, these words in explanation

[1] A scrap from unpublished MSS.

of the cause of his being there so unceremoniously: "Queen Elizabeth is dead, and your Majesty is King of England."

It was the most superb moment of King James's life. He was in the thirty-seventh year of his age, and had been King of Scotland for nearly thirty-six years; but through the last twenty of these,—or, at all events, ever since February 1586-7, when the captivity of his mother came to its tragical close at Fotheringay,—his constant thought had been of the chance he had of being one day King also of England. Latterly the chance had grown into a probability; but it had never become a certainty. Although, according to all ordinary legal construction of the case, his hereditary claim to the English succession was paramount, there were impediments in the way. There were vehement objections to him on the part of large sections of the English community; and that especial and official recognition of his claims which might have gone far to overcome these objections, or to neutralise them, had remained wanting. Queen Elizabeth herself had, or was supposed to have, the right of nominating her successor; but, though her relations to James through the whole of his Scottish reign had been condescendingly kindly, —though she had been in the habit of sending him letters of semi-parental advice, and sometimes of rebuke, in his minority, and had then and since shown her interest in him by allowing him a regular annual pension of English money, of no great amount but very welcome to him as a substantial supplement to his scanty Scottish revenues,—she had always resisted his importunities in what was with him the all-important matter of his succession to her crown.

Her declaration on that subject had been tantalisingly postponed; and James had been obliged to content himself with secret negotiations with such of her English statesmen and courtiers as might be able to persuade her to some distinct decision in his favour while there was yet time, or, if that should not be accomplished, might have influence themselves in bringing about the event which she had left undetermined. Such negotiations round the imperious old queen, clinging to life and sovereignty as she did, and regarding as little better than treason all speculation as to what would be after her death, were necessarily perilous; but they had been going on for some time, with the result that a party had been formed in the English Court favourable to the succession of King James, should circumstances make it possible. At the centre of this party was Secretary Sir Robert Cecil, Elizabeth's chief minister since the death of his father, the great Lord Burleigh, in 1598.

Elizabeth died in her palace at Richmond, in the seventieth year of her age, about three o'clock in the morning of Thursday the 24th of March 1602 (so in the English reckoning, but in the Scottish it was 1603), after an illness of some days, during the first four of which she lay in great pain on cushions, and partly delirious, refusing to go to bed or to take any food. Her Councillors, Secretary Cecil and Archbishop Whitgift among them, had been in attendance from the first; and they had contrived, on the day before her death, while she was lying speechless in the bed into which they had at last forced her, to extract a sign from her which intimated her consent that James should be her successor, or which they

found it convenient to construe to that effect. No sooner was she dead than there was a meeting of the Council in an apartment near that in which the corpse lay, to draft a proclamation of James as the new sovereign, and to take other measures necessary in the crisis. Secrecy was essential for a few hours; and, as the palace was full of people, including the weeping court-ladies and others not of the Council, there were orders that the gates should be shut, and that no one should be permitted either to leave the palace or to enter it without special warrant.

One person managed to evade the order and get in. This was the Sir Robert Cary of whom we have just heard. He was then a man of about forty-three years of age, and well known at Court, both from his high family connections and on his own account. His father, the late Lord Hunsdon, had been distinguished among Elizabeth's councillors by being related to her by cousinship; his brother, the present Lord Hunsdon, was now of the Council; and a sister of his, Lady Scroope, was one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting. His own services in the Queen's employment had been very various and had extended over many years. Among diplomatic missions on which she had sent him in his youth had been several to King James in Scotland; and latterly he had been in charge of one of the English wardenships on the Scottish Borders, and conspicuous for his vigour in the garrisoned defence of those northern parts of England against the cattle-lifting raids of their rough Scottish neighbours. While in this post, he had incurred the Queen's disfavour by marrying,—a fault which she always resented in any of her courtiers; and for a while she had refused

to see him or speak with him. He had contrived, however, to pacify her in a skilfully obtained interview; and that cloud had blown over. Hence, having come south on furlough from his wardenship just about the time when the Queen was seized with her fatal illness, and having taken lodgings in Richmond to await the issue, he had been admitted easily enough into the dying Queen's presence. "When I came to "Court," he tells us, "I found the Queen ill-disposed, "and she kept her inner lodging; yet she, hearing of "my arrival, sent for me. I found her in one of her "withdrawing chambers, sitting low upon her cushions. "She called me to her. I kissed her hand, and told "her it was my chiefest happiness to see her in safety, "and in health, which I wished might long continue. "She took me by the hand, and wrung it hard, and "said 'No, Robin, I am not well,' and then discoursed "with me of her indisposition, and that her heart "had been sad and heavy for ten or twelve days; "and in her discourse she fetched not so few as forty "or fifty great sighs. I was grieved at the first to "see her in this plight; for in all my lifetime before "I never knew her fetch a sigh, but when the Queen "of Scots was beheaded." This interview was on the night of Saturday, the 19th of March; and it was within the next day or two that, learning from his sister that the Queen had become worse and worse, and that there was no hope of her recovery, and remembering his friendly intercourse with the Scottish King on former occasions, he despatched a letter to James announcing the condition of affairs at Richmond, and resolved moreover that, when the Queen was actually dead, he would be himself the first man to carry the great news to Edinburgh. Once

again he was in the death-chamber. It was on the day before the Queen's death,—that Wednesday, the 23d of March, on which, lying speechless in bed, she gave the sign which Cecil and the other councillors construed as they desired. Among those who stood by her bedside on the evening of that day, while Archbishop Whitgift prayed with her several times in succession, was Sir Robert Cary. It was late, he tells us, when the group broke up, and the Queen was left to die, with only her waiting-women around her. Sir Robert had then gone to his lodgings in the town, and had given instructions that he should be called at the proper moment. Accordingly, about three o'clock on the following morning, when he knew for certain that the Queen was dead, he was at the palace gate. The porter had just received his orders not to admit any one that was not privileged; and even the bribe with which Sir Robert had already primed that official would not have been enough, had not one of the councillors, who chanced to be at the gate at the time, taken the responsibility of passing him in. He made his way through the chamber in which the weeping ladies were to that in which the councillors were assembled and were drafting their documents. His brother, Lord Hunsdon, and his sister, Lady Scroope, being already in his confidence, and his purpose having been guessed by Cecil and the rest, he found that they were very angry with him, and were making arrangements of their own for the necessary despatches to Edinburgh. In fact, they laid hold of him, told him he must remain where he was till their pleasure should be known, and, to show that they were in earnest, sent peremptory fresh

orders to the porter that no one was to be allowed to pass the gates except the servants that were to be sent presently to get ready the coaches and horses for the conveyance of the councillors themselves to Westminster. For an hour or so, Sir Robert walked about in the palace chagrined and disconcerted. He had got in with difficulty; but his exit seemed impossible. Bethinking himself at last, he went to the private chamber of his brother, Lord Hunsdon. His lordship, overpowered with the fatigues of the preceding days, was asleep, but was soon roused, and willing to assist. The two went together to the porter's gate, where the Council's servants were just making their egress to bring the horses and coaches. The porter could not prevent a great officer like Lord Hunsdon from going out with them; but he stopped Sir Robert. It needed some exertion and some angry words from Lord Hunsdon to cow the man; but this was accomplished, and Sir Robert, to his great relief, found himself outside the gate in the raw air of the dim March morning.

Not even yet were his difficulties over. Speeding from Richmond as fast as he could, he was in Westminster by himself, and in a friend's house there, some time before the Lords of Council arrived in their coaches. Learning, however, after they had arrived, that they were holding a meeting in Whitehall Gardens to make final arrangements for the proclamations of the new sovereign both in Westminster and in the City, he thought it might be as well to try again whether they would employ him for the service on which he had set his heart. He sent them word, therefore, that he was in town, and was waiting their pleasure. It was now past nine

o'clock, and the proclamations were to be at ten. The answer of the Council was a request to Sir Robert to come to them immediately; and, as it was conveyed with a kind of intimation that he would find them perfectly agreeable now to his proposal, he hastened to attend them. He was actually between the outer and the inner gate of Whitehall for this purpose, when a word sent out to him by a friendly councillor made him aware that the Council were deceiving him, and that, if he appeared among them, he would be laid fast. Then he hesitated no longer. Giving the Council the slip, and not staying for the proclamations or for anything else, he took horse at once, somewhere near Charing Cross, and was off for his tremendous ride northwards. He himself tells us the successive stages of his ride. He was at Doncaster that night, a distance of 155 miles from London; next night he reached a house of his own at Witherington in Northumberland, about 130 miles from Doncaster; leaving Witherington on Saturday morning, he accomplished some 50 miles more before noon that day, bringing him to Norham, close to the Tweed; after which there were still about 65 miles of that Scottish portion of his ride which lay between Norham and Edinburgh. He had hoped to be at Holyrood House before supper-time; but his dizziness and loss of blood from the fall from his horse in this last portion of his journey delayed him, as we have seen, for an hour or two.

After his first abrupt salutation of King James in Holyrood that Saturday night, there was naturally a longish colloquy between them. In the course of this colloquy the King's first excitement of joy was damped for a moment by the reflection that the

messenger had come of his own motive merely, and without letters from the English Privy Council. The production of a sapphire ring by Sir Robert removed, he tells us, all doubts. The ring, it appears, had been thrown to him out of one of the windows of Richmond Palace, just before he left, by his sister Lady Scroope; and one account makes it out that it had been a gift by King James himself to Queen Elizabeth, and that Lady Scroope took it off the withered finger of the Queen after her death, to serve as a token that could not be mistaken. Sir Robert's own account does not quite imply this, but *may* be so interpreted. All the members of the Hunsdon family, one gathers, were known to King James as having been for some time active in his interest. It was late before the colloquy ended, and Sir Robert was dismissed by the King for his much-needed rest of some days, in or near Holyrood, in charge of the Master of the Household, and under care of a surgeon.

Next day was Sunday; and, whatever whispers of the great event there may have been round King James himself in Holyrood, it does not appear that there was any hint of it that day among the congregations of the lieges in the Edinburgh churches. It is hardly possible that on the following day, when the proclamations of the new sovereign were palpitating northwards through England, with huzzas from town to town, in the very track of Sir Robert's ride (he had himself ordered them in Northumberland), the community of Edinburgh could still have remained ignorant of what had happened. There could be no public recognition of it, however, till the arrival of the authorised envoys from the English Privy Council;

and they did not arrive,—the laggards!—till the morning of Tuesday, the 29th of March. They were Sir Charles Percy, brother of the Earl of Northumberland, and Thomas Somerset, Esq., one of the sons of the Earl of Worcester; and they brought with them two documents. One was a copy of the Proclamation of King James that had been made in London and Westminster on the 24th. It was certified by the signatures of the Lord Mayor of London, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Chancellor Egerton, and twenty-seven more of the noblemen, prelates, and knights of the English Council; and it opened thus—"Forasmuch as it hath "pleased Almighty God to call to his mercy out of "this transitory life our Sovereign Lady, the high and "mighty princess, Elizabeth, late Queen of England, "France, and Ireland, by whose death and dissolution "the Imperial crowns of these realms foresaid are "now absolutely, wholly, and solely, come to the high "and mighty prince, James the Sixth, King of Scotland, "who is lineally and lawfully descended from the body "of Margaret, daughter of the high and renowned "prince, Henry the Seventh, King of England, France, "and Ireland, his great-great-grandfather,—the said "Lady Margaret being lawfully begotten of the body "of Elizabeth, daughter to King Edward the Fourth, "by which happy conjunction both the Houses of York "and Lancaster were united, to the joy unspeakable of "this kingdom, formerly rent and torn by long dissen-"sion of bloody and civil wars,—the same Lady Mar-"garet being also the eldest sister of Henry the Eighth, "of famous memory, King of England as aforesaid: "We therefore, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of "this realm, being here assembled, united and assisted

" with those of her late Majesty's Privy Council, and " with great numbers of other principal gentlemen of " quality in the kingdom, with the Lord Mayor, Alder- " men, and Citizens of London, and a multitude of other " good subjects and commons of this realm, thirsting " now after nothing so much as to make it known " to all persons who it is that, by law, by lineal succes- " sion, and undoubted right, is now become the only " Sovereign Lord and King of these imperial crowns, " to the intent that, by virtue of his power, wisdom, " and godly courage, all things may be provided for " which may prevent or resist either foreign attempts " or popular disorder, tending to the breach of the " present peace or to the prejudice of his Majesty's " future quiet, do now hereby, with one full voice, " and consent of tongue and heart, publicly proclaim " that the high and mighty prince, James the Sixth, " King of Scotland, is now, by the death of our late " Sovereign, Queen of England, of famous memory, " become also our only lawful and rightful liege lord, " James the First, King of England, France, and " Ireland, Defender of the Faith." The other document was a missive letter to King James, signed by nearly the same persons, and expressing their profound allegiance to him individually, and their desire to see him in England as speedily as possible. It contained, however, this paragraph :— " Further, " we have thought meet and necessary to advertise " your Highness that Sir Robert Cary is this morn- " ing departed from hence towards your Majesty, " not only without the consent of any of us who " were present at Richmond at the time of our late " Sovereign's decease, but also contrary to such " commandment as we had power to lay upon him,

"and to all decency, good manners, and respects "which he owed to so many persons of our degree; "whereby it may be that your Highness, hearing by "a bare report of the death of our late Queen, and "not of our care and diligence in establishing of your "Majesty's right here in such manner as is above "specified, may either receive report or conceive doubts "of other matter than (God be thanked) there is cause "you should: which we would have clearly prevented "if he had borne so much respect to us as to have "stayed for our common relation of our proceedings "and not thought it better to anticipate the same; "for we would have been loth that any person of quality "should have gone from hence who should not, with "report of her death, have been able to relate the just "effects of our assured loyalties." Both documents were read that day in the Scottish Privy Council in Edinburgh; and their purport was published for the general information.

What commotion in Edinburgh through the next few days! The King's leave-taking had to be hurried; and it was on Sunday the 3d of April that, rising from his place in St. Giles's Church after the sermon, he made what had to pass as his farewell speech to all his Scottish subjects. It was a speech intended to console them for their grievous loss. "There is "no more difference," he said, "betwixt London and "Edinburgh, yea, not so much, as betwixt Inverness "or Aberdeen and Edinburgh; for all our marches "are dry, and there be no ferries betwixt them"; and, after dilating somewhat further on the undeniable fact of the geographical continuity of his new kingdom with his old, he mentioned one of its probable consequences. "Ye mister [need] not doubt," he said

in conclusion, "but, as I have a body as able as any "king in Europe, whereby I am able to travel, so I "sall visie you every three year at the least, or ofter "as I sall have occasion." On Tuesday, 5th April, all being ready for his departure, there was the long procession, amid thunders of cannon from the Castle, which conducted him out of Edinburgh towards Berwick, there to begin the very leisurely tour through the northern and midland counties of England by which he came to London early in May. Many Scottish lords and gentlemen were in his retinue, but none of the royal family. The Queen, Prince Henry, and the Princess Elizabeth were to follow soon; and Prince Charles, afterwards Charles I., then a rickety child in his third year, and unfit to travel, was to remain in Scotland for about a year longer, under the charge of Lord and Lady Fyvie, afterwards known as Earl and Countess of Dunfermline.

From and after the 5th of April 1603 Holyrood, though not quite left to the rats, was no longer the home of royalty. King James's parting promise that he would revisit his native kingdom at least once every three years passed out of his mind; and not till 1617, fourteen years after the ecstatic delight of his removal to the banks of the Thames, did he find it worth while to recross the Tweed. Holyrood, with the other royal palaces of Scotland, was then refurbished for his temporary accommodation; but with that exception, and the further exception of two subsequent visits of Charles I. to Edinburgh, there was to be no sight of a sovereign face for many a day in the towered edifice under Arthur Seat. For Scotland as a whole, indeed, the five-and-thirty years which intervened between 1603 and 1638

may be described as that period of her history during which, though still retaining a nominal apparatus of independent autonomy, in the shape of a resident Scottish Privy Council and an occasional meeting of a Scottish Parliament, she was governed essentially and in the main from London through the post. "This I must say " for Scotland, and may truly vaunt it," said King James in a speech of rebuke to his somewhat troublesome English Parliament on the 31st of March 1607: "here " I sit and govern it with my pen; I write, and it is " done; and by a clerk of the council I govern Scotland " now,—which my ancestors could not do by the sword." The words were perfectly true; and they remained true for his son and successor, Charles I., till that point in his reign when the soul of Scotland flashed out again in her "National Covenant," electrifying the dormant Puritanism of England, and initiating the great Seventeenth Century Revolution in all the British Islands.

It is so long ago now, and so much has happened between, that one almost forgets to ask what became of Sir Robert Cary. Should there be any interest in that subject, however, here are the facts in brief:— Though appointed by King James, before he left Edinburgh, to be one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber, and promised further promotion, he did not at first benefit so much as he had expected from his signal piece of service to that King. After accompanying the King to England, he lost even his place in the bedchamber, and, probably from the grudge which Secretary Cecil and the other English councillors still owed to him, was kept otherwise in the background for some time. Gradually, however, he recovered favour. His first considerable rise was when Lord

and Lady Dunfermline brought the sickly Prince Charles into England. Sir Robert Cary's wife was then selected as the fittest person to succeed Lady Dunfermline in the charge of the delicate boy; and the honour to Sir Robert and his wife was the less envied them because it was generally expected that the boy would die in their hands. But he grew up under their careful tending, with evident improvement of his health year after year from his fifth year to his eleventh; and this ensured their future fortunes. Queen Anne always stood their friend, and influenced the King in their favour; Prince Henry, while he lived, treated them with respect; and after Prince Henry's death in 1612, when Prince Charles became heir-apparent in his room, who but Sir Robert Cary could be the chief man about the heir-apparent and the chamberlain of his household? There were ups and downs still; but Sir Robert and his wife had gifts and pensions, saw their sons and daughters suitably married, and found themselves in the English peerage at last. In 1621 Sir Robert became Baron Leppington. This was his last honour from King James; but in March 1626, at the coronation of Charles I., he was created Earl of Monmouth. He was then about sixty-six years of age; and he lived in that dignity till 1639, when he died at the age of about eighty. His *Memoirs*, written by himself, were first published from the manuscript in 1759.

PROPOSED MEMORIAL TO DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.[1]

It is two centuries and a half since Drummond of Hawthornden died; but he is still one of the most interesting figures in Scottish history. "A genius the most polite and verdant that ever the Scottish nation produced" was the character given of him in 1656 by Milton's nephew and pupil, Edward Phillips, in the preface to a collective edition of Drummond's poems brought out in London that year under Phillips's editorial care. Very possibly the words are Milton's own; for Phillips derived his notions of poetry from Milton, and there is other evidence of Milton's familiarity with the poetry of Drummond. At all events the words are singularly exact for their purpose. They imply, it is true, an imperfect recollection, if not a total ignorance, of the previous wealth of Scottish poetry, represented in such predecessors of Drummond as Barbour, James I., Henryson, Dunbar, Gavin Douglas, and Sir David Lindsay; but, even had Phillips's recollection of these been clearer and stronger than it was, his selection of the words "polite" and "verdant" as descriptive of those characteristics of Drummond's genius which were surest to strike Englishmen would not have been so much amiss, while for the range of Scottish time actually within Phillips's retrospect at the moment the wording of the eulogy was perfect.

[1] From *The Scotsman* of 29th December 1890.

The famous series of the older Scottish poets had come to an end on the death of Lindsay just before the Reformation; and from that time it seemed as if the Literary Muses had all but vanished from Scotland, dispossessed and superseded by quite another order of Muses, if that name can be stretched so as anyhow to include them,—the rougher and angrier Muses of vexed national questions, and especially of the Kirk Controversy. Call them Muses or what else you will, they were very momentous powers, and he is but a feeble Scot who will speak of them with contumely, or will ignore the great effects for Scotland and for all Britain that came out of their turmoil. Not the less it *is* depressing to Scottish patriotism nowadays to remember how long the turmoil lasted, how all-engrossing it was, and how much of native faculty and aspiration of the finer, deeper, and quieter sorts it must have stifled and extinguished. For the first twenty years after the Reformation there is the compensation, indeed, of the oratory and pre-eminent prose energy of Knox, and of the great literary fame and exquisite Latinity of Buchanan; but from the year 1580 onwards till 1725, or thereabouts, what a long tract of sterility in the literary annals of Scotland! Through that century and a half England prodigiously surpassed her former self, first astonishing the world by the outburst of her Elizabethan splendours, and then continuing the astonishment by the rich and varied literary activity of three succeeding ages, the latest of which was that of the Queen Anne wits. Scotland, on the other hand, had sunk incredibly below the promise of *her* former self. The Scottish pre-Reformation poets had been comparable, or more than comparable, with the very best of their English coevals, Chaucer alone deducted;

but, when the literary historian, leaving the crowded series of lustrous names, from those of Spenser, Bacon, and Shakespeare at one end, to those of Dryden and Pope at the other, which represent the literature of South Britain between 1580 and 1725, seeks in North Britain for equivalents, what does he find? No equivalents in the highest degree; but, at the utmost, if he mixes any strictness of conscience with his kindliness, only such an exception here and there to the general sterility that, if it is of the racy vernacular sort, it can be noted apart with pleasure on that account, or, if it is cognate with anything in the English series, it can be moved along that series till the proper interstice is found into which it can be fitted.

One indubitable exception, the exception in chief, was Drummond of Hawthornden. Born amid a people almost wholly absorbed in their Kirk controversy, it had somehow happened that here was one Scot whose ideal of life differed from the common. Of a meditative and philosophical temperament from his boyhood, a lover of books, art, and music, and with his tastes in such matters educated by foreign travel and by a familiarity with the recent English Elizabethan literature which must have been then excessively rare in North Britain, he had no sooner become Laird of Hawthornden by his father's death in 1610 than, abjuring all other occupations, he schemed out for himself that life of studious leisure which suited him best, and for which there could not, in all Scotland, have been a more beautiful home than the leafy dell of his lairdship and habitation :—

> "Dear wood, and you, sweet solitary place,
> Where from the vulgar I estrangèd live."

Here, accordingly, it was that, between 1610, when he

was in his twenty-fifth year, and 1625, when he was in his fortieth, he wrote at intervals, and uniformly in that southern English which he foresaw was thenceforward to be the general literary tongue of the British Islands, most of the poems by which he is now remembered. The quantity altogether was not large, and the pieces were all short individually; but the quality was genuine. No such poetry of artist-like delight in beauty of scenery, the soft and luscious in colour, form, language, and sound, pervaded at the same time by such a fine and high vein of pensive reflectiveness, had appeared in Scotland for many a day. This was at once recognised among his own countrymen; but the poems, or the rumour of them, went beyond Scotland. Before the close of the reign of the Scottish King James in England, Drummond was certainly the one man living in Scotland who was thought of by the London men of letters round the Court of that King as belonging, by right of real merit, to the poetic brotherhood of the reign. A London Scot or two, it is true, having the advantages of proximity and of Court connection, did divide with Drummond the applauses of the London circle of critics for Scottish merit in English verse-making; but, if the vote had been seriously taken, it was to Drummond that the competent judges would have sent the laurel. Hence, indeed, some of the most memorable incidents in Drummond's biography. Hence it was that the Elizabethan veteran Michael Drayton entered into such loving correspondence with him, addressing him "my dear, noble Drummond"; hence it was that, when any eminent Londoner chanced to make a tour in Scotland, he was sure to seek an introduction to Drummond; and hence that

immortal visit of the great Ben Jonson himself, when he was Drummond's guest in Hawthornden for a whole week in the winter of 1618-9, entertained Drummond with all the gossip of London for thirty years back, stunned him with loud talk about everything, and drank an immensity of his wine. Phillips's encomium of 1656, when Drummond had been seven years dead, only expressed, one can see, an opinion already formed while Drummond was still alive, and in the prime of his manhood.

The encomium included, or ought to have included, more than Drummond's performances in verse. His fine and verdant genius is no less discernible in his prose writings. His little essay entitled "A Cypress Grove" is a piece of prose so superlatively excellent that one wonders how it should be so little known,—why, in fact, it should not have had a prominent place in all professed collections of the flowers of English seventeenth-century prose. For high-toned philosophic thoughtfulness, ingenuity of artistic phantasy, musical beauty of style, and perfection of literary taste and finish, there is nothing superior, of the same length, if anything quite equal, in all Sir Thomas Browne, or in all Jeremy Taylor. That essay was published in 1623, as an adjunct to one of his volumes of poems; and, though there is a good deal of other and later prose from Drummond, it is mainly of a character less readable now, and less acceptable in some quarters where it may still receive attention. For the *quæstiones vexatæ* did at last coil themselves round Drummond, and in his later years, in his own despite, he had to become a polemical politician. King James had been succeeded by King Charles; on the 23d of July 1637 Jenny Geddes hurled her stool in St. Giles's; and

Scotland then passed into that trebly troubled period of her always troubled history which, commencing with her own defiance to Charles and Laud in her National Scottish Covenant, and proceeding thence to her alliance with the English Parliamentarians in the Solemn League and Covenant, includes Montrose's brief year of Royalist outblaze and anti-Covenanting triumph, and all the rest of the chequered sequel till the English Republicans brought Charles to the block. No Scot through that long agony was permitted to be neutral; if any one had tried, he would have been torn from his retirement, and obliged to declare himself. Drummond did declare himself, and it was on what was then, and still is, among his countrymen, the unpopular side. In a series of prose tracts, circulated surreptitiously, some of them of the nature of satirical squibs, he advocated views of Scottish politics which were very much those of Montrose and the Hamiltons. Even where this may be remembered, in a general way, to his discredit now, there is much, however, in the tracts themselves to arrest the unfavourable judgment and turn it into respect. Their literary ability and clever wit may count for little with those who resent their purport; but there are passages of high-minded and eloquent earnestness that must startle any reader in such a context. While inculcating upon his countrymen an effete and impracticable political philosophy of passive obedience, and while indicating a preference on Drummond's own part for something of that florid Anglican ecclesiasticism against which his countrymen were fighting, he flings out to the right and to the left remonstrances much needed on both sides, and especially a doctrine of religious toleration far beyond the apprehension of

either, or of the time generally. Laud he virtually shoves aside as an interloper; and, on the whole, the substance of the tracts, in one of the two directions to which they were addressed, is like a message to Charles that he had been unfortunately wrong in his Scottish policy from the first, inasmuch as Scotland always had been Scotland, was Scotland still, and could not be drilled by any mortal force against her own will into anything else. Here, in fact, Drummond reveals his very heart. A disciple though he was of the English Elizabethans in literature, deploring the low condition of Scottish literature in comparison, and practising in his own writings the accepted book-English of the south, he was yet thoroughly a Scot by his strongest personal and private affections. No Scot of his generation more fond of the antiquities and legends of his country, or more learned in that kind of lore; his chief pastime all through his life was in researches into Scottish records and family genealogies back to Malcolm Canmore and beyond; and his special recreation amid the troublesome party-pamphleteering of his later years was the composition of his *History of the Five Jameses*. This was not published till some years after his death, and, though of some interest as a specimen of the silvering effect of his ornate English upon very savage matters, is the poorest of all his writings in respect of real worth. But what of that other relic of Drummond, if it be really his, which did not come to light till thirty years after his decease, and then in the surprising form of a piece of broad Fifeshire farce in dog-Latin hexameters, entitled *Polemo-Middinia inter Vitarvam et Nebernam*, —*i.e.* "The Midden-Fecht between Tarvet and Newbarns"? If that really *is* Drummond's (which is

possible, or even probable, though not absolutely certain), it is one excellent feather more in his cap. It would be proof positive that the stately and pensive Laird of Hawthornden was a typical Scot also, no less than Dunbar and Lindsay before him, or Burns after him, in the Scottish faculty of uproarious fun, and could give and take, when he chose, with any Newhaven fishwife, or any Gilmerton carter, in their own roughest vocabulary.

The tradition of Drummond has come down pretty vividly from his own time to the present. This, however, is perhaps less due to continued acquaintance with his writings than to certain aiding circumstances. Few names of literary celebrity, as Charles Lamb used to remark, are so delightful to pronounce as "Drummond of Hawthornden"; and in England, so far as Drummond has been kept in mind at all, it seems to have been chiefly by this conserving efficacy of his gracefully-sounding name. In Scotland, and especially in the vicinity of Edinburgh, the aids in recollecting him have been of a stronger kind:—

> "Who knows not Melville's beechy grove,
> And Roslin's rocky glen,
> Dalkeith, which all the virtues love,
> And classic Hawthornden?"

When Scott wrote these lines, ninety-one years ago, the reputation of the valley of the Esk for scenic beauty and picturesqueness, and the fashion of holiday peregrinations to it, on that account and on account of the attractions of its historical associations, by the citizens of Edinburgh or by tourists visiting Edinburgh, had already been fully formed. The reputation and the fashion have been kept up ever since, and Drummond's memory has had the benefit. Whatever

the other attractions of the valley of the Esk and its neighbourhood, the twin pre-eminence among them has belonged to Roslin and Hawthornden; and hence it has happened that hundreds and thousands who had never read a line of Drummond's, and knew but vaguely in what century he lived, have looked admiringly at the cliff-socketed and quaintly gabled and turreted edifice, partly built by himself and partly of more ruinous antiquity, where he had his dwelling, have walked round it in the grounds where he once walked, have descended as he used to descend into the leafy dell of the river beneath, and so have taken into their minds some image of the man by the memory of whom the place has been consecrated.

Hawthornden is in the parish of Lasswade; and it is in the churchyard of Lasswade, two miles from the Hawthornden mansion, that one sees the bit of old masonry, called the Drummond Aisle, and once a portion of the church itself, within which is Drummond's grave. Did he foresee that this would be his resting-place, or was he only writing metaphorically, when he penned the lines, now perhaps the most frequently quoted piece of his verse, giving instructions for his epitaph? His most intimate friend and correspondent through his life was Sir William Alexander of Menstrie, eventually Earl of Stirling and Secretary of State for Scotland,—one of those London Scots above mentioned who divided for a while with Drummond in London literary circles the palm of the primacy in Scoto-British poetry. There was no jealousy between them on that account; on the contrary, Alexander, as a man of high Court influence, regarded himself as standing in a relation of patronage to Drummond, while Drummond, acknowledging this relation, and proud of it, looked up

to Alexander and admired him hugely. Their friendship, nevertheless, was as close and affectionate as ever bound two men together, and in their letters to each other they always, to signify this, called themselves, in the fashion of the pastoralists, Alexis and Damon. Well, it was in the year 1621, or thereabouts, that Drummond, then only about thirty-five years of age, but hardly recovered from a severe illness which had brought him to the doors of death and left him in a mood of melancholy depression, sent a sonnet to Alexander, containing these lines :—

> "Amidst thy sacred cares and courtly toils,
> Alexis, when thou shalt hear wandering fame
> Tell death hath triumphed o'er my mortal spoils,
> And that on earth I am but a sad name,
> If thou e'er held me dear, by all our love,
> By all that bliss, those joys, Heaven here us gave,
> I conjure thee, and by the Maids of Jove,
> To carve this short remembrance on my grave :—
> 'Here Damon lies, whose songs did sometime grace
> The murmuring Esk : may roses shade the place!'"

In the memorial to Drummond now proposed by the influential committee of which Lord Melville is chairman it is intended that this instruction shall be obeyed as faithfully as possible. The bushing of roses round the grave was but a wish, and a bushing of roses round the Drummond Aisle in Lasswade Churchyard is unfortunately not practicable in that situation. But there may be some decoration of the little aisle containing the grave ; and on the wall, whether in the interior or outside, there may be a medallion of Drummond or other commemorative sculpture, with room for his own words of epitaph. That, most properly, is to be the first object, the primary object, of the committee that has been formed for the promotion of the memorial.

Should the amount of the subscriptions, however, permit something more, the precise form of the addition may be matter for consideration. Should there be a bust or other piece of monumental sculpture besides that which is to decorate the sepulchre at Lasswade, surely Edinburgh is the place for that supplement, and, within Edinburgh, perhaps St. Giles's Cathedral. For was not Drummond one of the earliest alumni of Edinburgh University; was not his donation of books to the University, which is still kept apart in the University Library under the name of The Drummond Collection, a special testimony of his regard and affection for the University in its infancy, and for the whole city; all through the years of his residence at Hawthornden must not the seven miles of road between Hawthornden and Edinburgh have been his most familiar ride or walk; every other week must he not have been actually in Edinburgh for hours and days together, visiting his Edinburgh relatives and friends, seen in colloquy with some of them on the causey of the old High Street near St. Giles's Church, and known to have his favourite lounge in that street in the shop of Andro Hart, bookseller and publisher, just opposite the Cross?

Although the increase among us of late of the practice of such commemorative tributes to eminent personages of the past has provoked cynical criticism in some quarters, it is really one of the creditable signs of our time. The more numerous the objects of interest to any nation in its own history, or in history generally, in times preceding the bustle of the present, the richer the mind of that nation, and the higher its capabilities. Even the range of time to which it will go back for worthy objects of interest must count for

something in the reckoning. The recent is only the departing present, and has so left its residues in the present, whether of admirations or of animosities, that participation in testimonies of regard for public men remembered as having recently moved amidst us signifies little more with many than sensitiveness to the common duties of present social life, or sometimes even of present political partisanship. To be susceptible of the commemorative instinct with respect to objects and persons removed from ourselves by a generation or two, or a century or two, is a rarer thing, and implies a larger and finer endowment of historical knowledge and feeling.

ALLAN RAMSAY[1]

In the reign of Queen Anne there were the stirrings of a literary revival in Scotland. No name connects itself more distinctly with this interesting phenomenon than that of Allan Ramsay.

Born in 1686, of humble parentage, in the village of Leadhills, in the wild inland parish of Crawfordmuir in Lanarkshire, and educated in the ordinary fashion at the parish school there, Ramsay was brought to Edinburgh in 1701, when he was in his fifteenth year, and was apprenticed to a periwig-maker. The statement sometimes made that he began life as a barber is therefore incorrect. The crafts of the barber and the wig-maker were then distinct. *Wig* and *periwig* are one and the same thing, and both are derived, it seems, though one would hardly suppose so, from the Latin *pilus*, hair. Thus,—Latin, *pilus*, hair; old Italian, *pilucca*, a mass of hair or head of hair; this, still in old Italian, corrupted into *perucca*; whence the French *perruque*; that word adopted into English, but generally twirled into *periwig* to make it native; from which word *periwig* if you lop off the *peri*, the sole remnant of the original *pilus*, you have the mere twirl or termination *wig*, standing as a substantive word and answering the whole purpose. Now a wig-maker, periwig-maker,

[1] Written in 1883, in the form of a Lecture.

or *perruquier*, was no mean tradesman in those old times, extending from the middle of the seventeenth century to near the end of the eighteenth, when it was the strange custom, in all civilised European countries, for people to wear artificial heads of hair, not as mere substitutes for the natural growths in cases of necessity (which had been a usage everywhere from time immemorial), but as fashionable adornments of bulging volume and fantastic device. An essay might be written on the fact that there was such a wig-wearing age in Europe, nearly the same in range of time in every country of that continent; in which essay it might be plausibly argued that there was an inherent congruity between the strange wig-wearing habit and the intellectual and spiritual characteristics, and consequently the literary capabilities and products, of the age distinguished by the habit. One can hardly conceive Addison or Dr. Johnson, for example, without a wig, or Wordsworth, or Byron, or Sir Walter Scott, with one.

Be that as it may,—and there are curious intricacies in the speculation,—Allan Ramsay not only belonged to the wig-wearing age in Scotland, but was brought up to the business of wig-making and wig-dressing for the Edinburgh lieges. It was no bad employment in a population of between 30,000 and 40,000 inhabitants, including resident noblemen and lairds, and a good many professional men and merchants, all of whom wore wigs, and liked them to be handsome. Accordingly, when, in or about the year 1708, or just after the Union, young Ramsay, having concluded his apprenticeship, started in business for himself, in some shop in the High Street, or one

of its offshoots, his prospects were fair enough. Skipping four years, and coming to the year 1712, when he was twenty-five years of age, we find him just married to the daughter of a respectable Edinburgh lawyer, and in very comfortable circumstances otherwise. It was then that he was beginning to be known in the cosy society of old Edinburgh as not only an expert wig-maker but also something besides.

"Whenever fame, with voice of thunder,
Sets up a chield a warld's wonder,
Either for slashing folk to dead,
Or having wind-mills in his head,
Or poet, or an airy beau,
Or ony twa-legged rary-show,
They wha have never seen't are busy
To speer what-like a carlie is he."

The words are Ramsay's own, by way of preface in one of his poems to an account of his personal appearance and general character. The description, though not written till 1719, will do very well for 1712:—

"*Imprimis*, then, for tallness, I
Am five feet and four inches high;
A black-a-viced, snod, dapper, fallow,
Nor lean nor overlaid with tallow;
With phiz of a Morocco cut,
Resembling a late man of wit,
Auld-gabbit Spec., wha was sae cunning
To be a dummie ten years running.
Then, for the fabric of my mind,
'Tis mair to mirth than grief inclined:
I rather choose to laugh at folly
Than show dislike by melancholy,
Well judging a sour heavy face
Is not the truest mark of grace."

Elsewhere, more briefly, he describes himself as

"A little man that lo'es my ease,"

and again as one who much enjoyed, in good company,

"An evening and guffaw."

This kind of pleasure he was in the habit of enjoying more particularly in one of those many clubs into which the citizens of dense Auld Reekie then distributed themselves for the purposes of conviviality. It consisted of about a dozen kindred spirits calling themselves "The Easy Club," professing literary tastes, and making it a rule that each of them should be known within the club by some adopted name of literary associations. Ramsay's first club-name was "Isaac Bickerstaff," but he changed it after a while for "Gavin Douglas." There is a significance in both names, and in the exchange of the one for the other.

Through Ramsay's apprenticeship, and also after he had set up in business for himself, he had been a diligent reader of all accessible books. Recollecting what books *were* then accessible to one in his circumstances, we can see, however, that his readings had been mainly in two directions. In the first place, there was the current English or London literature of his own time, or as much of it as was wafted to Edinburgh in the shape of the last or recent publications, in prose or verse, by Defoe, Prior, Swift, Steele, Colley Cibber, Addison, Rowe, Aaron Hill, Gay, and others of the Queen Anne wits; among whom is not to be forgotten the youthful Pope, then rising to the place of poetic supremacy that had been left vacant by Dryden. Of Ramsay's cognisance of this contemporary English literature of the south, his admiration of it, and enjoyment of it, there is abundant evidence. He had become aware, however, of another

literature, indigenous to his own Scotland, though lying far back, for the most part, in an obscure Scottish past. Through Watson's *Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems,* Ruddiman's edition of Gavin Douglas's *Translation of Virgil,* and Sage's edition of Drummond of Hawthornden, he had been attracted to the old Scottish poets, finding in them a richness of antique matter that came home to his heart amid all his readings in Steele, Pope, and Addison :—

"The chiels of London, Cam., and Ox.,
Hae raised up great poetic stocks
Of *Rapes*, of *Buckets*, *Sarks*, and *Locks*,
While we neglect
To shaw their betters. This provokes
Me to reflect

On the learn'd days of Gawn Dunkell :
Our country then a tale could tell ;
Europe had nane mair snack and snell
At verse or prose ;
Our Kings were poets too themsell,
Bauld and jocose."

In this double direction of Ramsay's literary likings,—his respectful obeisance to the literary merits of his London contemporaries, and his fonder private affection for the old poets of his Scottish vernacular,—we have the key to his own literary life.

Between 1712 and 1718, or between Ramsay's twenty-sixth and his thirty-third year, just when the reign of Queen Anne was passing into that of George I., the Edinburgh public became more and more alive to the fact that they had a poet among them in the guise of a wig-maker. A number of little pieces of verse, with Ramsay's name attached, came out in succession in the form of humbly printed leaflets, some of them with the sanction of "The

Easy Club," as having been originally written for that convivial fraternity, but others independently, when that club had ceased to exist. On examining these earliest pieces of Ramsay, one finds that, while some of them are satires or moralisings in a rather crude English, in imitation of the London poetry then in vogue, the best are occasional poems in the colloquial Scotch of Ramsay's own day, suggested by local incidents, characters, and humours. In these he was evidently connecting himself as well as he could with the broken chain of those older vernacular poets to whom he looked back with so much interest. We can even detect those predecessors of his in this broken chain whom he took more immediately for his models. They were the two later Semples of Beltrees,—Robert Semple (1595-1659), the author of "The Piper of Kilbarchan," and his son Francis Semple (died about 1685), author of "Fye, let us a' to the bridal," "Maggie Lauder," and other Scottish songs. Not that these were poets of anything like the dimensions of the older Dunbar, Gavin Douglas, and Lindsay, but that they had exhibited the literary capabilities of the Scottish tongue in that more recent and less archaic stage from which one might make a fresh start. That he had still a hankering, however, after the greater and older Scots was shown by the boldest, and in point of length most considerable, of his attempts at authorship during the time now under notice. This was the publication, in 1717, of a new edition of the old Scotch poem, in complex rhyming stanzas, called *Christ's Kirk on the Green*, attributed by some to King James V., and by others, with utter improbability, to the poet-king James I. To the original of this old poem of Scottish humour,

the language of which is so difficult that it had puzzled previous editors, there was added a continuation by himself, in the form of a second canto, carrying on the story; and, the demand having been such that another edition was called for in the following year, he then added a third canto. Ramsay was no philologist, and his edition of the old poem was of no value for scholars; but his appreciation of the poetic merit of the old piece must have been beyond the common, and his two cantos of continuation were something of a feat. "Nothing so rich," says a modern critic, "had appeared since the strains of Dunbar or Lindsay"; and of the opening of the third canto the same critic says that it is "an inimitable sketch of rustic life,—coarse, but as true as any by Teniers." The judgment is perhaps too favourable; but this venture of Ramsay's in the archaic Scotch deservedly increased the reputation he had won by his easier and shorter pieces in the ordinary colloquial Scotch of his own day, and by some of their English companions.

Before the year 1718, when *Christ's Kirk on the Green* appeared with its completed continuation, Ramsay had begun to combine the business of bookselling with that of wig-making. For this purpose he had transferred himself and his family to a house in the High Street, just opposite Niddry's Wynd, for which he had adopted the sign of "The Mercury"; and it was from this house that the completed edition of the old poem was published. The house still stands, now numbered 153 in the street, glass-fronted to a great extent in the two storeys above the basement, and with the old stone stair of entrance to these storeys, but bereft of an upper storey and attics

which once belonged to it and gave it a more imposing look. To understand, however, the dignity of the house and its situation in Allan Ramsay's days, one has to remember that the Edinburgh of those days consisted all but entirely of that one long descending ridge or backbone of edifices from the Castle to Holyrood of which the High Street proper was the main portion. One must remember further that the High Street was not then the continued clear oblong from the Lawnmarket to the Netherbow which we now see, but that up a portion of the middle of it, along the face of St. Giles's Church, there ran an obstructive block of buildings,—consisting of the Old Tolbooth or "Heart of Midlothian" at the upper end, and a tall pile of dwelling-houses and shops, called the Luckenbooths, at the lower end,—the effect of which was to choke the traffic at that part, and divide it between a narrow tortuous foot-passage along the buttresses of the church on the one side and a somewhat wider causey for vehicles on the other. Now, as Ramsay's new house was a good way below this obstruction, and in that open space of the High Street where there was plenty of room to breathe, it was in an excellent position for bookselling or any similar business. There was actually a temptation for a citizen lingering in this spot to ascend Allan Ramsay's stone stair to have a look at the books on sale, especially if he could have his wig dressed at the same time. That this was possible we have Ramsay's own word. It is generally represented in memoirs of him that he had given up wigmaking when he entered his new shop of the Mercury opposite to Niddry's Wynd, and there took to bookselling; but these lines, appended to the description

of his personal appearance and character in the poem already quoted, settle the question—

> "Say, wad ye ken my gate of fending,
> My income, management, and spending?
> Born to nae landship,—mair's the pity,—
> Yet denizen of this fair city,
> I make what honest shift I can,
> And in my ain house am good-man;
> Which stands in Ed'nburgh's street the sun-side.
> I theek the out and line the inside
> Of mony a douce and witty pash,
> And baith ways gather in the cash."

Ramsay remained in this house in the High Street about eight years. They were busy and prosperous years. During the first three of them, or from 1718 to 1721, he continued to send forth miscellaneous little pieces, some in English but most in Scotch, in sheets or half-sheets, to be bought separately. There were songs, satirical sketches and squibs, elegies, metrical epistles to friends or to public persons, odes on Edinburgh events or on such national occurrences as the collapse of the South Sea Bubble, and a few essays in a more general and serious vein, chiefly in the English heroic couplet, such as *The Morning Interview*, *Tartana or the Plaid*, and *Content*. The sheets or half-sheets were bought eagerly. It was at this time, indeed, according to the tradition, that the good-wives of Edinburgh were in the habit of sending out their children, with a penny or twopence, to buy "Allan Ramsay's last piece," whatever it might be. His popularity, however, did not rest on such humble demonstrations of liking. He was now one of the most respected of the citizens of Edinburgh, spoken of universally among them as their poet, and on terms of personal intimacy with the most distinguished of them. He had become a notability even beyond the

bounds of Edinburgh,—through the south of Scotland, if not yet in all Scotland. His name had even been carried to London, with the effect of some vague notion of him among the English wits there as a poet in the colloquial Scotch possessing all the north part of the island by himself. This recognition of him in the south seems to have begun about the year 1720, and to have been occasioned by a little Scottish pastoral elegy, entitled *Richy and Sandy*, which he had written on the death of Addison in the previous year. The "Richy" of this piece is Sir Richard Steele, and the "Sandy" is Mr. Alexander Pope; and they are represented as two fellow-shepherds of the famous deceased bewailing his loss in a colloquy. Steele and Pope could hardly avoid hearing of such a thing; and, indeed, pirated copies reached London, and there was a reprint of the elegy there from Lintot's press, with the Scotch dreadfully mangled. It seems to have been with a view to prevent such piracy and misprinting of his productions in future, as well as to confirm his reputation by putting all his writings before the public in permanent form, that Ramsay, in the course of 1720, sent out subscription papers for a collected edition of his works. The appeal was most successful; and in July 1721 the collected edition did appear, in a handsome quarto volume, of about 400 pages, with the title POEMS BY ALLAN RAMSAY, "printed by Mr. Thomas Ruddiman for the Author." The "Alphabetical List of Subscribers" prefixed to the volume contains nearly 500 names, most of them Scotch, but with a sprinkling of English. Among the Scottish names are those of nearly all the Scottish nobility of the day, in the persons of seven dukes, five marquises, twenty-one earls, one viscount, and twenty-three lords,

while the columns are crowded with the names of the best-known baronets, knights, lairds, judges, lawyers, merchants, and civic functionaries in and round about Edinburgh and in other parts of Scotland. Among the few names from England one reads with special interest, besides that of the literary Scoto-Londoner "John Arbuthnot, M.D," these three,—"Mr. Alexander Pope," "Sir Richard Steele" (for two copies), and "Mr. Richard Savage." The volume was dedicated to the Ladies of Scotland in a few gallant and flowery sentences; and there was a preface, addressed specially to the critics, full of shrewd sense, and showing Ramsay's command of an easy and light style of English prose.

Another distinction of the volume was a portrait of the author, excellently engraved after a painting by an Edinburgh artist-friend. It represents a youngish man, with a bright, knowing, clever face, a smallish and sensitive nose, and fine and lively eyes. One observes that there is no wig, or semblance of a wig, in the portrait, but only the natural hair, closely cropped to the shape of the head, and surmounted by a neat Scotch bonnet, cocked a little to one side. As it is impossible to suppose that a man who lived by making wigs did not wear one himself, the inference must be that, in a portrait which was to represent him in his poetical capacity, the wig was rejected by artistic instinct. In later portraits of Ramsay it is the same, save that the small Scotch bonnet is superseded in these by a kind of cloth turban of several folds. In proof that this deviation in the portraits from the usual habit of real life was suggested by artistic instinct, one may note that there is the same deviation in the portraits of most of the other real British poets of the

wig-wearing age. Pope, Prior, Gay, and Thomson all appear in their portraits with something like Allan Ramsay's turban or night-cap for their head-dress; and it descended to the poet Cowper.

Very likely, however, about the date at which we are now arrived, Allan Ramsay, though he still continued to wear a wig when off poetic duty, had ceased to make wigs for others. The collected edition of his poems had brought him 400 guineas at once, worth then about 1000 guineas now; and his bookselling,—including now a steady sale of that volume in a cheaper edition for the general public, and also the sale of the new pieces of an occasional kind which he continued to issue in separate form as fast as before,—was becoming a sufficient trade in itself. By the year 1724, at all events, when he had added a considerable number of such stray occasional pieces to those bound up in the collected volume, he seems to have been known in the little business world of Edinburgh no longer as "wig-maker," but simply as "bookseller," or sometimes more generally as "merchant." Two enterprises of that year, both in the way of editorship rather than authorship, must have occupied a good deal of his time. These were THE TEA TABLE MISCELLANY: A COLLECTION OF CHOICE SONGS, SCOTS AND ENGLISH, and THE EVERGREEN: A COLLECTION OF SCOTS POEMS WROTE BY THE INGENIOUS BEFORE 1600. The first, originally in two volumes, but subsequently extended to four, was a collection of what might be called contemporary songs of all varieties, with the inclusion of floating popular favourites from the seventeenth century, deemed suitable, according to the somewhat lax standard of taste in those days, for musical evening-parties in families, or for companies of gentlemen by

themselves. The purpose of the other, as the title indicates, was more scholarly. It was to recall the attention of his countrymen to that older Scottish poetry which he still thought too little regarded by furnishing selected specimens of Henryson, Dunbar, Kennedy, Scott, Montgomery, the Wedderburns, Sir Richard Maitland, and others certainly or presumably of earlier centuries than the seventeenth. The intention was creditable, and the book did good service, though the editing of the old Scotch was inaccurate and meagre. In reality, Ramsay's exertions for the two publications were not merely editorial. The TEA TABLE MISCELLANY, when completed, besides containing about thirty songs contributed by "some ingenious young gentlemen" of Ramsay's acquaintance,—among whom we can identify now Hamilton of Bangour, young David Malloch, a William Crawford, and a William Walkinshaw,—contained about sixty songs of Ramsay's own composition. Similarly, among several mock-antiques by modern hands inserted into THE EVERGREEN, were two by Ramsay himself, entitled *The Vision* and *The Eagle and Robin Redbreast.*

The time had come for Ramsay's finest and most characteristic performance. More than once, in his miscellanies hitherto, he had tried the pastoral form in Scotch, whether from a natural tendency to that form or induced by recent attempts in the English pastoral by Ambrose Philips, Pope, and Gay. Besides his pastoral elegy on the death of Addison, and another on the death of Prior, he had written a pastoral dialogue of real Scottish life in 162 lines, entitled *Patie and Roger*, introduced by this description :—

> "Beneath the south side of a craigy bield,
> Where a clear spring did halesome water yield,

Twa youthfu' shepherds on the gowans lay,
Tending their flocks ae bonny morn of May:
Poor Roger graned till hollow echoes rang,
While merry Patie hummed himsel a sang."

This piece, and two smaller pastoral pieces in the same vein, called *Patie and Peggy* and *Jenny and Meggie*, had been so much liked that Ramsay had been urged by his friends to do something more extensive in the shape of a pastoral story or drama. He had been meditating such a thing through the year 1724, while busy with his two editorial compilations; and in June 1725 the result was given to the public in THE GENTLE SHEPHERD: A SCOTS PASTORAL COMEDY. Here the three pastoral sketches already written were inwoven into a simply-constructed drama of rustic Scottish life as it might be imagined among the Pentland Hills, near Edinburgh, at that time, still within the recollection of very old people then alive, when the Protectorates of Cromwell and his son had come to an end and Monk had restored King Charles. The poem was received with enthusiastic admiration. There had been nothing like it before in Scottish literature, or in any other; nothing so good of any kind that could be voted as even similar; and this was at once the critical verdict. It is a long while ago, and there are many spots in Edinburgh which compete with one another in the interest of their literary associations; but one can stand now with particular pleasure for a few minutes any afternoon opposite that decayed house in the High Street, visible as one is crossing from the South Bridge to the North Bridge, where Allan Ramsay once had his shop, and whence the first copies of THE GENTLE SHEPHERD were handed out, some day in June 1725, to eager Edinburgh purchasers.

The tenancy of this house by Ramsay lasted but a year longer. He had resolved to add to his general business of bookselling and publishing that of a circulating library, the first institution of the kind in Edinburgh. For this purpose he had taken new premises, still in the High Street, but in a position even more central and conspicuous than that of "The Mercury" opposite Niddry's Wynd. They were, in fact, in the easternmost house of the Luckenbooths, or lower part of that obstructive stack of buildings, already mentioned, which once ran up the High Street alongside of St. Giles's Church, dividing the traffic into two narrow and overcrowded channels. It is many years since the Luckenbooths and the whole obstruction of which they formed a part were swept away; but from old prints we can see that the last house of the Luckenbooths to the east was a tall tenement of five storeys, with its main face looking straight down the lower slope of the High Street towards the Canongate. The strange thing was that, though thus in the very heart of the bustle of the town as congregated round the Cross, the house commanded from its higher windows a view beyond the town altogether, away to Aberlady Bay and the farther reaches of sea and land in that direction. It was into this house that Ramsay removed in 1726, when he was exactly forty years of age. The part occupied by him was the flat immediately above the basement floor, but perhaps with that floor in addition. The sign he adopted for the new premises was one exhibiting the heads or effigies of Ben Jonson and Drummond of Hawthornden.

Having introduced Ramsay into this, the last of his Edinburgh shops, we have reached the point where our present interest in him all but ends. In 1728,

when he had been two years in the new premises, he published a second volume of his collected poems, under the title of POEMS BY ALLAN RAMSAY, VOLUME II., in a handsome quarto matching the previous volume of 1721, and containing all the pieces he had written since the appearance of that volume; and in 1730 he published *A Collection of Thirty Fables*. These were his last substantive publications, and with them his literary career may be said to have come to a close. Begun in the last years of the reign of Queen Anne, and continued through the whole of the reign of George I., it had just touched the beginning of that of George II., when it suddenly ceased. Twice or thrice afterwards at long intervals he did scribble a copy of verses; but, in the main, from his forty-fifth year onwards, he rested on his laurels. Thenceforward he contented himself with his bookselling, the management of his circulating library, and the superintendence of the numerous editions of his *Collected Poems*, his *Gentle Shepherd*, and his *Tea Table Miscellany* that were required by the public demand, and the proceeds of which formed a good part of his income. It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that, when Allan Ramsay's time of literary production ended, the story of his life in Edinburgh also came to a close, or ceased to be important. For eight-and-twenty years longer, or almost till George II. gave place to George III., Ramsay continued to be a living celebrity in the Scottish capital, known by figure and physiognomy to all his fellow-citizens, and Ramsay's bookshop at the end of the Luckenbooths, just above the Cross, continued to be one of the chief resorts of the well-to-do residents, and of chance visitors of distinction. Now and then, indeed, through the twenty-eight

years, there are glimpses of him still in special connections with the literary, as well as with the social, history of Edinburgh. When the English poet Gay, a summer or two before his death in 1732, came to Edinburgh on a visit, in the company of his noble patrons, the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry, and resided with them in their mansion of Queensberry House in the Canongate,—now the gloomiest and ugliest-looking house in that quarter of the old town, but then reckoned of palatial grandeur,—whither did he tend daily, in his saunterings up the Canongate, but to Allan Ramsay's shop? One hears of him as standing there with Allan at the window to have the city notabilities and oddities pointed out to him in the piazza below, or as taking lessons from Allan in the Scottish words and idioms of the *Gentle Shepherd*, that he might explain them better to Mr. Pope when he went back to London.

Some years later, when Ramsay had reached the age of fifty, and he and his wife were enjoying the comforts of his ample success, and rejoicing in the hopes and prospects of their children,—three daughters, "no ae wally-draggle among them, all fine girls," as Ramsay informs us, and one son, a young man of three-and-twenty, completing his education in Italy for the profession of a painter,—there came upon the family what threatened to be a ruinous disaster. Never formally an anti-Presbyterian, and indeed regularly to be seen on Sundays in his pew in St. Giles's High Kirk, but always and systematically opposed to the unnecessary social rigours of the old Presbyterian system, and of late under a good deal of censure from clerical and other strict critics on account of the dangerous nature of much of the literature put in

circulation from his library, Ramsay had ventured at last on a new commercial enterprise, which could not but be offensive on similar grounds to many worthy people, though it seems to have been acceptable enough to the Edinburgh community generally. Edinburgh having been hitherto deficient in theatrical accommodation, and but fitfully supplied with dramatic entertainments, he had, in 1736, started a new theatre in Carrubber's Close, near to his former High Street shop. He was looking for great profits from the proprietorship of this theatre and his partnership in its management. Hardly had he begun operations, however, when there came the extraordinary statute of 10 George II. (1737), regulating theatres for the future all over Great Britain. As by this statute there could be no performance of stage-plays out of London and Westminster, save when the King chanced to be residing in some other town, Ramsay's speculation collapsed, and all the money he had invested in it was lost. It was a heavy blow; and he was moved by it to some verses of complaint to his friend Lord President Forbes and the other judges of the Court of Session. While telling the story of his own hardship in the case, he suggests that an indignity had been done by the new Act to the capital of Scotland:—

> "Shall London have its houses twa
> And we doomed to have nane ava'?
> Is our metropolis, ance the place
> Where langsyne dwelt the royal race
> Of Fergus, this gate dwindled down
> To a level with ilk clachan town,
> While thus she suffers the subversion
> Of her maist rational diversion?"

However severe the loss to Ramsay at the time, it was soon tided over. Within six years he is found

again quite at ease in his worldly fortunes. His son, for some years back from Italy, was in rapidly rising repute as a portrait-painter, alternating between London and Edinburgh in the practice of his profession, and a man of mark in Edinburgh society on his own account; and, whether by a junction of the son's means with the father's, or by the father's means alone, it was now that there reared itself in Edinburgh the edifice which at the present day most distinctly preserves for the inhabitants the memory of the Ramsay family in their Edinburgh connections. The probability is that, since Allan had entered on his business premises at the end of the Luckenbooths, his dwelling-house had been somewhere else in the town or suburbs; but in 1743 he built himself a new dwelling-house on the very choicest site that the venerable old town afforded. It was that quaint octagon-shaped villa, with an attached slope of green and pleasure-ground, on the north side of the Castle Hill, which, as well from its form as from its situation, attracts the eye as one walks along Princes Street, and which still retains the name of Ramsay Lodge. The wags of the day, making fun of its quaint shape, likened the construction to a goose-pie; and something of that fancied resemblance may be traced even now in its extended and improved proportions. But envy may have had a good deal to do with the comparison. It is still a neat and comfortable dwelling internally, while it commands from its elevation an extent of scenery unsurpassed anywhere in Europe. The view from it ranges from the sea-mouth of the Firth of Forth on the east to the first glimpses of the Stirlingshire Highlands on the west, and again due north across the levels of the New Town, and the flashing

waters of the Firth below them, to the bounding outline of the Fifeshire hills. When, in 1743, before there was as yet any New Town at all, Allan Ramsay took up his abode in this villa, he must have been considered a fortunate and happy man. His entry into it was saddened, indeed, by the death of his wife, which occurred just about that time; but for fourteen years of widowerhood, with two of his daughters for his companions, he lived in it serenely and hospitably. During the first nine years of those fourteen he still went daily to his shop in the Luckenbooths, attending to his various occupations, and especially to his circulating library, which is said to have contained by this time about 30,000 volumes; but for the last five or six years he had entirely relinquished business. There are authentic accounts of his habits and demeanour in his last days, and they concur in representing him as one of the most charming old gentlemen possible, vivacious and sprightly in conversation, full of benevolence and good humour, and especially fond of children and kindly in his ways for their amusement. He died on the 7th of January 1758, in the seventy-second year of his age, and was buried in Greyfriars Churchyard.

Ramsay had outlived nearly all the literary celebrities who had been his contemporaries during his own career of active authorship, ended nearly thirty years before. Swift and Pope were gone, after Gay, Steele, Arbuthnot, and others of the London band, who had died earlier. Of several Scotsmen, his juniors, who had stepped into the career of literature after he had shown the way, and had attained to more or less of poetic eminence under his own observation, three,—Robert Blair, James Thomson,

and Hamilton of Bangour,—had predeceased him. Their finished lives, with all the great radiance of Thomson's, are wholly included in the life of Allan Ramsay. David Malloch, who had been an Edinburgh *protégé* of Ramsay's, but had gone to London and Anglicised himself into "Mallet," was about the oldest of his literary survivors into another generation; but in that generation, as Scotsmen of various ages, from sixty downwards to one-and-twenty, living, within Scotland or out of it, at the date of Ramsay's death, we count Lord Kames, Armstrong, Reid, Hume, Lord Monboddo, Hugh Blair, George Campbell, Smollett, Wilkie, Blacklock, Robertson, John Home, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, Lord Hailes, Falconer, Meikle, and Beattie. Such of these as were residents in Edinburgh had known Allan Ramsay personally; others of them had felt his influence indirectly; and all must have noted his death as an event of some consequence.

The time is long past for any exaggeration of Allan Ramsay's merits. But, call him only a slipshod little Horace of Auld Reekie, who wrote odes, epistles, satires, and other miscellanies in Scotch through twenty years of the earlier part of the eighteenth century, and was also, by a happy chance, the author of a unique and delightful Scottish pastoral, it remains true that he was the most considerable personality in Scottish literary history in order of time after Drummond of Hawthornden, or, if we think only of the vernacular, after Sir David Lindsay, and that he did more than any other man to stir afresh a popular enthusiasm for literature in Scotland after the Union with England. All in all, therefore, it is with no small interest that, in one's walks along the

most classic thoroughfare of the present Edinburgh, one gazes at the white stone statue of Allan Ramsay, from the chisel of Sir John Steell, which stands in the Gardens just below the famous "goose-pie villa." It looks as if the poet had just stepped down thence in his evening habiliments to see things thereabouts in their strangely changed condition. By the tact of the sculptor, he wears, one observes, not a wig, but the true poetic night-cap or turban.

LADY WARDLAW AND THE BARONESS NAIRNE[1]

In 1719 there was published in Edinburgh, in a tract of twelve folio pages, a small poem, 27 stanzas or 216 lines long, entitled *Hardyknute, a Fragment.* It was printed in old spelling, to look like a piece of old Scottish poetry that had somehow been recovered; and it seems to have been accepted as such by those into whose hands the copy had come, and who were concerned in having it published. Among these were Duncan Forbes of Culloden, afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session, and Sir Gilbert Elliott of Minto, afterwards Lord Justice-Clerk; but there is something like proof that it had come into their hands indirectly from Sir John Hope Bruce of Kinross, baronet, who died as late as 1766 at a great age, in the rank of lieutenant-general, and who, some time before 1719, had sent a manuscript copy of it to Lord Binning, with a fantastic story to the effect that the original, in a much defaced vellum, had been found, a few weeks before, in a vault at Dunfermline.

The little thing, having become popular in its first published form, was reproduced in 1724 by Allan Ramsay in his *Evergreen*, which professed to be "a collection of Scots Poems wrote by the ingenious

[1] Written in 1883, as a lecture for the Class of English Literature in the Edinburgh Association for the University Education of Women.

before 1600"; but it there appeared with corrections and some additional stanzas. In 1740 it had the honour of a new appearance in London, under anonymous editorship, and with the title "Hardyknute, a Fragment; being the first Canto of an Epick Poem: with general remarks and notes." The anonymous editor, still treating it as a genuine old poem, of not later than the sixteenth century, praises it very highly. "There is a grandeur, a majesty of sentiment," he says, "diffused through the whole: a true sublime, which nothing can surpass." It was but natural that a piece of which this could be said should be included by Percy in his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, published in 1765. It appeared, accordingly, in the first edition of that famous book, still as an old poem and in antique spelling; and it was reprinted in the subsequent editions issued by Percy himself in 1767, 1775, and 1794, though then with some added explanations and queries.

It was through Percy's collection that the poem first became generally known and popular. Even there, though in very rich company, it was singled out by competent critics for special admiration. But, indeed, good judges, who had known it in its earlier forms, had already made it a favourite. The poet Gray admired it much; and Thomas Warton spoke of it as "a noble poem," and introduced an enthusiastic reference to it into one of his odes. Above all, it is celebrated now as having fired the boyish genius of Sir Walter Scott. "I was taught *Hardyknute* by heart before I could read the ballad myself," he tells us, informing us further that the book out of which he was taught the ballad was Allan Ramsay's *Evergreen* of 1724, and adding, "It was the first poem I ever

learnt, the last I shall ever forget." In another place he tells us more particularly that it was taught him out of the book by one of his aunts during that visit to his grandfather's farmhouse of Sandyknowe in Roxburghshire on which he had been sent when only in his third year for country air and exercise on account of his delicate health and lameness, and which he remembered always as the source of his earliest impressions and the time of his first consciousness of existence. He was accustomed to go about the farmhouse shouting out the verses of the ballad incessantly, so that the Rev. Dr. Duncan, the minister of the parish, in his calls for a sober chat with the elder inmates, would complain of the interruption and say, "One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as where that child is." *Hardyknute*, we may then say, was the first thing in literature that took hold of the soul and imagination of Scott; and who knows how far it may have helped to determine the cast and direction of his own genius through all the future? Afterwards, through his life in Edinburgh, Ashestiel, and Abbotsford, he was never tired of repeating snatches of the strong old thing he had learnt at Sandyknowe; and the very year before his death (1831) we find him, when abroad at Malta in the vain hope of recruiting his shattered frame, lamenting greatly, in a conversation about ballad-poetry, that he had not been able to persuade his friend Mr. John Hookham Frere to think so highly of the merits of *Hardyknute* as he did himself.

What *is* the piece of verse so celebrated? It must be familiar to many; but we may look at it again. We shall take it in its later or more complete form, as consisting of 42 stanzas or 336 lines; in which form, though it is still only a fragment, the conception or

story is somewhat more complex, more filled out, than in the first published form of 1719. The fragment opens thus :—

"Stately stept he east the wa',
And stately stept he west;
Full seventy years he now had seen,
With scarce seven years of rest.
He lived when Britons' breach of faith
Wrocht Scotland mickle wae;
And aye his sword tauld, to their cost,
He was their deadly fae.

High on a hill his castle stood,
With halls and towers a-hicht,
And guidly chambers fair to see,
Whare he lodged mony a knicht.
His dame, sae peerless ance and fair,
For chaste and beauty deemed,
Nae marrow had in a' the land,
Save Eleanour the Queen.

Full thirteen sons to him she bare,
All men of valour stout;
In bluidy fecht with sword in hand
Nine lost their lives bot doubt:
Four yet remain; lang may they live
To stand by liege and land!
High was their fame, high was their micht,
And high was their command.

Great love they bare to Fairly fair,
Their sister saft and dear:
Her girdle shawed her middle jimp,
And gowden glist her hair.
What waefu' wae her beauty bred,
Waefu' to young and auld;
Waefu', I trow, to kith and kin,
As story ever tauld!"

Here we see the old hero Hardyknute in peace in the midst of his family, his fighting days supposed to be over, and his high castle on the hill, where he and his lady dwell, with their four surviving sons and their one daughter, Fairly Fair, one of the lordly boasts of

a smiling country. But suddenly there is an invasion. The King of Norse, puffed up with power and might, lands in fair Scotland; and the King of Scotland, hearing the tidings as he sits with his chiefs, "drinking the blude-red wine," sends out summonses in haste for all his warriors to join him. Hardyknute receives a special message.

"Then red, red grew his dark-brown cheeks;
Sae did his dark-brown brow;
His looks grew keen, as they were wont
In dangers great to do."

Old as he is, he will set out at once, taking his three eldest sons with him, Robin, Thomas, and Malcolm, and telling his lady in his farewell to her:—

"My youngest son sall here remain
To guaird these stately towers,
And shoot the silver bolt that keeps
Sae fast your painted bowers."

And so we take leave of the high castle on the hill, with the lady, her youngest son, and Fairly fair, in it, and follow the old lord and his other three sons over the moors and through the glens as they ride to the rendezvous. On their way they encounter a wounded knight, lying on the ground and making a heavy moan:—

"'Here maun I lie, here maun I die,
By treachery's false guiles;
Witless I was that e'er gave faith
To wicked woman's smiles.'"

Hardyknute, stopping, comforts him; says that, if he can but mount his steed and manage to get to his castle on the hill, he will be tended there by his lady and Fairly fair herself; and offers to detach some of his men with him for convoy.

"With smileless look and visage wan
The wounded knicht replied:
'Kind chieftain, your intent pursue,
For here I maun abide.

'To me nae after day nor nicht
Can e'er be sweet or fair;
But soon, beneath some drapping tree,
Cauld death sall end my care.'"

Farther pleading by Hardyknute avails nothing; and, as time presses, he has to depart, leaving the wounded knight, so far as we can see, on the ground as he had found him, still making his moan. Then, after farther riding over a great region, called vaguely Lord Chattan's land, we have the arrival of Hardyknute and his three sons in the King of Scotland's camp, minstrels marching before them playing pibrochs. Hardly have they been welcomed when the battle with the Norse King and his host is begun. It is described at considerable length, and with much power, though confusedly, so that one hardly knows who is speaking or who is wounded amid the whirr of arrows, the shouting, and the clash of armour. One sees, however, Hardyknute and two of his sons fighting grandly in the pell-mell. At last it is all over, and we know that the Norse King and his host have been routed, and that Scotland has been saved.

"In thraws of death, with wallert cheek,
All panting on the plain,
The fainting corps of warriors lay,
Ne'er to arise again:
Ne'er to return to native land;
Nae mair wi' blythesome sounds
To boist the glories of the day
And shaw their shinand wounds.

On Norway's coast the widowed dame
May wash the rock with tears,

May lang look ower the shipless seas,
Before her mate appears.
Cease, Emma, cease to hope in vain:
Thy lord lies in the clay;
The valiant Scots nae reivers thole
To carry life away.

There, on a lea where stands a cross
Set up for monument,
Thousands full fierce, that summer's day,
Filled keen war's black intent.
Let Scots, while Scots, praise Hardyknute;
Let Norse the name aye dread;
Aye how he foucht, aft how he spared,
Sall latest ages read."

Here the story might seem to end, and here perhaps it was intended at first that it should end; but in the completer copies there are three more stanzas, taking us back to Hardyknute's castle on the high hill. We are to fancy Hardyknute and his sons returning joyfully thither after the great victory:—

"Loud and chill blew the westlin wind,
Sair beat the heavy shower;
Mirk grew the nicht ere Hardyknute
Wan near his stately tower:
His tower, that used with torches' bleeze
To shine sae far at nicht,
Seemed now as black as mourning weed:
Nae marvel sair he sich'd.

'There's nae licht in my lady's bower;
There's nae licht in my hall;
Nae blink shines round my Fairly fair,
Nor ward stands on my wall.
What bodes it? Robert, Thomas, say!'
Nae answer fits their dread.
'Stand back, my sons! I'll be your guide!'
But by they passed wi' speed.

'As fast I have sped ower Scotland's faes.'
There ceased his brag of weir,
Sair shamed to mind oucht but his dame
And maiden Fairly fair.

Black fear he felt, but what to fear
He wist not yet with dread:
Sair shook his body, sair his limbs;
And all the warrior fled."

And so the fragment really ends, making us aware of some dreadful catastrophe, though what it is we know not. Something ghastly has happened in the castle during Hardyknute's absence, but it is left untold. Only, by a kind of necessity of the imagination, we connect it somehow with that wounded knight whom Hardyknute had met lying on the ground as he was hurrying to the war, and whom he had left making his moan. Was he a fiend, or what?

It is quite useless to call this a historical ballad. There was a reference, perhaps, in the author's mind, to the battle of Largs in Ayrshire, fought by the Scots in 1263, in the reign of Alexander III., against the invading King Haco of Norway; and there is a Fairly Castle on a hill near Largs which may have yielded a suggestion and a name. But, in truth, any old Scottish reign, and any Norse invasion, will do for time and basis, and the ballad is essentially of the romantic kind, a story snatched from an ideal antique, and appealing to the pure poetic imagination. A battle is flung in; but what rivets our interest is the hero Hardyknute, a Scottish warrior with a Danish name, and that stately castle of his, somewhere on the top of a hill, in which he dwelt so splendidly with his lady, his four sons, and their sister Fairly fair, till he was called once more to war, and in which there was some ghastly desolation before his return. Such as it is, we shall all agree, I think, with Gray, Warton, Scott, and the rest of the best critics, in

admiring the fragment. It has that something in it which we call *genius*.

It seems strange now that any critic could ever have taken the ballad for a really old one, to be dated from the sixteenth century or earlier. Apart from the trick of old spelling, and affectation of the antique in a word or two, the phraseology, the manner, the cadence, the style of the Scotch employed, are all of about the date of the first publication of the ballad, the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The phrase "Let Scots, while Scots, praise Hardyknute," and the phrase "And all the warrior fled," are decisive; and, while there might be room for the supposition that some old legend suggested the subject to the author, the general cast of the whole forbids the idea that it is merely a version of some transmitted original.

Suspicions, indeed, of the modern authorship of *Hardyknute* had arisen in various quarters long before any one person in particular was publicly named as the author. That was first done by Percy in 1767, in the second edition of his *Reliques*, when he gave his reasons for thinking, from information transmitted to him from Scotland by Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, that the ballad was substantially the composition of a Scottish lady, who had died in 1727, eight years after it had first appeared in its less perfect form, and three years after it had appeared with the improvements and the additional stanzas. That lady was Elizabeth Halket, born in 1677, one of the daughters of Sir Charles Halket of Pitfirran in Fifeshire, baronet, but who had changed her name to Wardlaw in the year 1696, when she became the wife of Sir Henry Wardlaw of Pitreavie, also a Fifeshire baronet. All subsequent evidence has

confirmed the belief that this Lady Wardlaw was the real author of *Hardyknute*, though, to mystify people, it was first given out by her relatives as an ancient fragment. This was the statement more especially of the already-mentioned Sir John Hope Bruce of Kinross, who was one of her brothers-in-law.

Of Lady Wardlaw herself we hear nothing more distinct than that she was "a woman of elegant accomplishments, who wrote other poems, and practised drawing and cutting paper with her scissors, and who had much wit and humour, with great sweetness of temper." So we must be content to imagine her,—a bright-minded and graceful lady, living in Fifeshire, or coming and going between Fifeshire and Edinburgh, nearly two centuries ago, and who, while attending to her family duties and the duties of her station, could cherish in secret a poetic vein peculiarly her own, and produce at least one fine ballad of an ideal Scottish antique. This in itself would be much. For that was the age of Queen Anne and of the first of the Georges, when poetry of an ideal or romantic kind was perhaps at its lowest ebb throughout the British Islands, and the poetry most in repute was that of the modern school of artificial wit and polish represented by Addison and Pope.

But this is not all. In the year 1859 the late Mr. Robert Chambers published a very ingenious and interesting essay entitled "The Romantic Scottish Ballads: their Epoch and Authorship." The ballads to which he invited critical attention were the particular group which includes *Sir Patrick Spens*, *Gil Morrice*, *Edward Edward*, *The Jew's Daughter*, *Gilderoy*, *Young Waters*, *Edom o' Gordon*, *Johnnie of Braidislee*, *Mary Hamilton*, *The Gay Goss Hawk*, *Fause Foodrage*,

The Lass of Lochryan, *Young Huntin*, *The Douglas Tragedy*, *Clerk Saunders*, *Sweet William's Ghost*, and several others. With but one or two exceptions, these were first given to the world either in Percy's *Reliques* in 1765, or in the subsequent collections of Herd (1769), Scott (1802), and Jamieson (1806); but, since they were published, they have been favourites with all lovers of true poetry,—the "grand ballad" of *Sir Patrick Spens*, as Coleridge called it, ranking perhaps highest, on the whole, in general opinion. There is a certain common character in all the ballads of the group, a character of genuine ideality, of unconnectedness or but hazy connectedness with particular time or place, of a tendency to the weirdly, and also of a high-bred elegance and lightsome tact of expression, distinguishing them from the properly historical Scottish Ballads, such as the *Battle of Otterbourne*, or the Border Ballads proper, such as *Kinmont Willie*, or the homely rustic ballads of local or family incident of which so many have been collected. Hence the distinctive name of "romantic," usually applied to them.

Respecting these ballads the common theory was, and still is, that they are very old indeed,—that they are the transmitted oral versions of ballads that were in circulation among the Scottish people before the Reformation. This theory Mr. Chambers challenged, and by a great variety of arguments. Not only was it very suspicious, he said, that there were no ancient manuscripts of them, and that, save in one or two cases, they had never been heard of till the eighteenth century; but the internal evidence, of conception, sentiment, costume, and phraseology,—not in lines and passages merely, where change from an original

might be supposed, but through and through, and back to the very core of any supposed original,—all pointed, he maintained, to a date of composition not farther back than the beginning of the century in which they first came into print. He maintained farther that they all reveal the hand of some person of superior breeding and refinement, with a cultivated literary expertness and sense of the exquisite, and that, just as the difference of age would be seen if one of them were placed side by side with an authentic piece of old Scottish poetry of the sixteenth century, so would this other difference of refined or cultured execution be at once seen if one of them were placed side by side with a genuine popular ballad of lowly origin, such as used to please in sheets on street-stalls and in pedlars' chap-books. Farther still, in all or most of the ballads concerned, there are, he argued, traces of feminine perception and feeling. And so, still pressing the question, and noting the recurrence of phrases and ideas from ballad to ballad of the group, not to be found in other ballads, but looking like the acquired devices of one and the same writer's fancy,—some of the most remarkable of which recurring ideas and phrases he chased up to the ballad of *Hardyknute*,—he arrived at the conclusion that there was a "great likelihood" that all or most of the ballads he was considering were either absolutely the inventions of Lady Wardlaw of Pitreavie, or such complete recasts by her of traditional fragments that she might be called the real author. He would not advance the conclusion as more than a "great likelihood," and he allowed that it might be still controverted; but he cited in its favour the fact that so high an authority as Mr. David Laing had previously intimated his impression that

Hardyknute and *Sir Patrick Spens* were by the same hand.

Were Mr. Chambers's conclusion to be verified, it would be a sore wrench to the patriotic prejudices of many to have to abandon the long-cherished fancy of the immemorial, or at least remote, antiquity of so many fine Scottish favourites. But what a compensation! For then that Lady Wardlaw whom we can already station, for her *Hardyknute* alone, as undoubtedly one woman of genius in the poverty-stricken Scotland of the beginning of the eighteenth century, would shine out with greatly increased radiance as the author of a whole cycle of the finest ballad-pieces in our language, a figure of very high importance in Scottish literary history, a precursor or sister of Burns and of Scott. For my own part, I would willingly submit to the wrench for a compensation so splendid. I am bound to report, however, that Mr. Chambers's speculation of 1859 was controverted strenuously at the time, has been pronounced a heresy, and does not seem to have been anywhere generally accepted. It was controverted especially, within a year from its appearance, in a pamphlet of reply by Mr. Norval Clyne of Aberdeen, entitled "The Scottish Romantic Ballads and the Lady Wardlaw Heresy"; and I observe that Professor Child of America, in his great Collection of English and Scottish Ballads, pays no respect to it, treats it as exploded by Mr. Clyne's reply, and expressly dissociates *Sir Patrick Spens* and other ballads of the class from *Hardyknute*. It may be enough, in these circumstances, merely to intimate my opinion that the controversy is by no means closed. There were shrewder and deeper suggestions, I think, in Mr. Chambers's paper of 1859 than Mr.

Clyne was able to obviate; and, having observed that most of the lore on the subject used by Mr. Clyne in his reply, his adverse references and quotations included, was derived from Mr. Chambers's own Introduction and Notes to his three-volume edition of Scottish Songs and Ballads in 1829, I cannot but presume that Mr. Chambers had all that lore sufficiently in his mind thirty years afterwards, and found nothing in it to impede or disconcert him then in his new speculation. Apart, however, from the special question of Lady Wardlaw's concern in the matter, Mr. Chambers seems to me to have moved a very proper and necessary inquiry when he started his theory of the comparatively recent origin of all or most of the Scottish Romantic Ballads. In what conception, what kind of language, does the opposite theory couch itself? In the conception that, besides the series of those literary products of past Scottish generations, the work of learned or professional writers, from the time of Barbour onwards, that have come down to us in books, or in old manuscript collections like that of Bannatyne, there was always a distinct literature of more lowly origin, consisting of ballads and songs recited or sung in Scottish households in various districts, and orally transmitted from age to age with no names attached to them, and indeed requiring none, inasmuch as they were nobody's property in particular, but had "sprung from the heart of the people." Now, this phrase, "sprung from the heart of the people," I submit, is, if not nonsensical, at least hazy and misleading. Nothing of fine literary quality ever came into existence, in any time or place, except as the product of some individual person of genius and of somewhat more than average culture. Instead of saying that such things "spring

from the heart of the people," one ought rather to say therefore that they "spring *to* the heart of the people." They live after their authors are forgotten, are repeated with local modifications, and so become common property. It is, of course, not denied that this process must have been at work in Scotland through many centuries before the eighteenth. The proof exists in scraps of fine old Scottish song still preserved, the earliest perhaps the famous verse on the death of Alexander III., and in lists, such as that in *The Complaint of Scotland*, of the titles of clusters of old Scottish songs and tales that were popular throughout the country in the sixteenth century, but have perished since. The very contention of Mr. Chambers respecting *Sir Patrick Spens* and the other ballads in question was that the fact that there is no mention of them in those old lists is itself significant, and that they have a set of special characteristics which came into fashion only with themselves.

If Lady Wardlaw *was* the author of those ballads, or of some of them, we have lost much by her secretiveness. We have been put in a perplexity where perplexity there ought to have been none. The cause, on her part, was perhaps less a desire for mystification than an amiable shrinking from publicity, dislike of being talked of as a literary lady. This was a feeling which the ungenerous mankind of the last century,—husbands, brothers, uncles, and brothers-in-law,—thought it proper to foster in any feminine person of whose literary accomplishments they were privately proud. It affected the careers of not a few later Scottish women of genius in the same century, and even through part of our own. Passing over several such, and among them Lady Anne

Barnard, the authoress of *Auld Robin Gray*, let me come to an instance so recent that it can be touched by the memories of many that are still living.

In the year 1766, seven years after the birth of Burns, and five before that of Scott, there was born, in the old house of Gask in Strathearn, Perthshire, a certain Carolina Oliphant, the third child of Laurence Oliphant the younger, who, by the death of his father the next year, became the Laird of Gask and the representative of the old family of the Oliphants.

They were a Jacobite family to the core. The Laird and his father had been out in the Rebellion of 1745; they had suffered much in consequence and been long in exile; and not till a year or two before the birth of this little girl had they been permitted to return and settle on their shattered estates. They were true to their Jacobitism even then, acknowledging no King but the one "over the water," praying for him, corresponding with him, and keeping up the recollection of him in their household as almost a religion. Carolina was named Carolina because, had she been a boy, she was to have been named Charles, and she used to say that her parents had never forgiven her for having been born a girl. But two boys were born at last, and there were sisters both older and younger; and so, among Oliphants, and Robertsons of Struan, and Murrays, and other relatives, all Jacobite, and all of the Scottish Episcopal persuasion, Carolina grew up in the old house of Gask, hearing Jacobite stories and Highland legends from her infancy, and educated with some care. The mother having died when this,

her third, child was but eight years of age, the Laird was left with six young ones. "A poor valetudinary person," as he describes himself, he seems, however, to have been a man of fine character and accomplishments, and to have taken great pains with his children. King George III., hearing somehow of his unswerving Jacobitism and the whimsicalities in which it showed itself, is said to have sent him this message by the member for Perthshire: "Give my compliments, not " the compliments of the King of England, but those " of the Elector of Hanover, to Mr. Oliphant, and tell " him how much I respect him for the steadiness of " his principles."

Somewhat stately and melancholic himself, and keeping up the ceremonious distance between him and his children then thought proper, the Laird of Gask had those liberal and anti-morose views of education which belonged especially to Scottish non-juring or Episcopalian families. A wide range of reading was permitted to the boys and the girls; dancing, especially reel-dancing, was incessant among them,—at home, in the houses of neighbouring lairds, or at county-balls; in music, especially in Scottish song, they were all expert, so that the rumour of a coming visit of Neil Gow and his violin to Strathearn, with the prospect it brought them of a week extraordinary of combined music and reel-dancing, would set them all madly astir; but the most musical of the family by far was Carolina. She lived in music, in mirth, legend, Highland scenery, and the dance, a beautiful girl to boot, and called "the Flower of Strathearn," of tall and graceful mien, with fine eyes, and fine sensitive features, slightly proud and aquiline. And so to 1792, when her father, the valetudinary laird,

died, some of his children already out in the world, but this one, at the age of twenty-six, still unmarried.

For fourteen years more we hear of her as still living in the old house of Gask with her brother Laurence, the new Laird, and with the wife he brought into it in 1795,—the even tenor of her existence broken only by some such incident as a visit to the north of England. During this time it is that we become aware also of the beginnings in her mind of a deep new seriousness, a pious devoutness, which, without interfering with her passionate fondness for song and music, or her liking for mirth and humour and every form of art, continued to be thenceforth the dominant feeling of her life, bringing her into closer and closer affinity with the "fervid" or "evangelical" in religion in whatever denomination it appeared. All this while, or for the greater part of it, there was an engagement between her and a half-cousin of hers, Captain Nairne. He was of Irish birth, but of the Scottish family of the Perthshire Nairnes, and heir, after his elder brother's death, to the Nairne peerage, should that peerage, which had been attainted after the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715, be ever revived. Of that there seemed no hope, and Captain Nairne's fortunes and prospects were of the poorest. Not till the year 1806, therefore, when he was promoted to the brevet rank of Major, and obtained the appointment of Assistant-Inspector-General of Barracks in Scotland, were the betrothed cousins able to marry, she then in her fortieth year, and he nine years older.

Their married life of four-and-twenty years was spent almost wholly in Edinburgh. Residing first in a cottage in one of the suburbs of the town, they were known for a good while there as a gentleman and

lady of slender means, but distinguished family connections, having an only son, of delicate constitution, whom they were educating privately, and on whose account they lived in a rather retired manner, cultivating a few select friendships, but not going much into general society. Ravelston House, at the foot of the Corstorphine Hills, of which Mrs. Nairne's younger sister became mistress in 1811 by her marriage with the then Keith of Ravelston, was one of the few places in which Mrs. Nairne and her husband were regularly to be seen at parties. Though this and occasional meetings elsewhere must have brought her into talking acquaintance with Scott,—in whose life Ravelston House was so dear and familiar that it became the suggestion of his castle of Tullyveolan in *Waverley*,—there is no evidence of any intimacy between the two; nor does Mrs. Nairne's name once occur, I think, in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, full though that book is of allusions to persons and things memorable in Edinburgh while the great wizard was its most illustrious inhabitant. One of the many kindly acts of Scott's life, however, had some influence on the fortunes of Mrs. Nairne. During the visit of George IV. to Edinburgh in 1822, Scott took occasion to suggest to him that the restoration of the attainted Jacobite families to their titles would be a graceful and popular act of his reign, and the consequence was a Bill for the purpose which passed Parliament and received the royal assent in 1824. Thus, at the age of sixty-seven, Major Nairne became Baron Nairne of Nairne in Perthshire, and his wife, at the age of eight-and-fifty, Baroness Nairne. It seems to have been about this date, or shortly afterwards, though I am not quite sure, that they had a temporary residence in Holyrood

Palace. At all events, I have been informed that at one time they had apartments there.

In 1830, six years afrer the recovery of his title, Lord Nairne died. This broke Lady Nairne's domiciliary tie to Edinburgh. She removed first to the south of England, to be with some of her relatives; thence to Ireland, where she lived a year or two; and thence in 1834 to the Continent, on account of the ill-health of her son, the new Lord Nairne, then a young man of six-and-twenty. For the next three years, she, her son, and her widowed sister Mrs. Keith, moved about, through France, Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, mainly for the recreation and recruiting of the sickly young Lord, who, however, died at Brussels in December 1837, in his thirtieth year, and was there buried.

The widowed Baroness, thus childless and lonely in the world, continued to live abroad for a year or two longer, chiefly in Germany and in Paris. Her consolations in her bereavement were in correspondence with her nephews and nieces at home, in readings in religious and other good books, in her interest in Christian missions and other movements of Protestant Evangelism, and in secret acts of charity in aid of such missions and movements, or in relief of private distresses. A foreign waiting-maid, who was long in her service abroad, described her afterwards in these words: "My lady was as near to an angel as human weakness might permit." But she was not to die abroad. In the year 1843, just after the Disruption of the Scottish Church,—in which event, though she remained a loyal Scottish Episcopalian as before, her interest was remarkably deep,—she was persuaded to return to Scotland and take up

her residence once more at Gask: not now in the old house in which she had been born, but in the new mansion that had been built by her nephew, James Blair Oliphant, then Laird of Gask. Here she lived two years more, in the serene piety of a beautiful old age, and in deeds, every week or every day, of benevolence and mercy. She was able to visit Edinburgh once or twice; and it was there, in the year 1844, that she consulted Dr. Chalmers, whom she admired greatly and with whom she had already been in correspondence, as to fit objects for such charitable donations as her thrift enabled her to spare. She gave him, besides other smaller sums, the £300 which enabled him to accomplish the object he had then most at heart by acquiring a site for the schools and church he had resolved to plant, and did plant, amid what he called the "heathenism" of the West Port, in the very labyrinth of closes in that rank neighbourhood which had been made hideous by the Burke and Hare murders of 1828. Dr. Chalmers alone knew of the gift; no one else. A few months more of invalid existence at Gask House, with failing memory, and somewhat paralytic, and the saintly lady's life was over. She died October 27, 1845, in the house of Gask, at the age of seventy-nine. Her remains rest in a chapel near that house, erected for Episcopal service on the site of the old parish church, in the midst of the scenery of her native Strathearn, which she loved in life so well.

That this woman had ever written a line of verse was a secret which she all but carried to the grave with her. And yet for fifty years, no less, people all round her had been singing her songs and talking about them with admiration, and phrases from them had

become household words throughout Scotland, and some of them were universally spoken of as the finest Scottish songs, the songs of keenest and deepest genius, since those of Burns.

At how early a period in her life she, who could sing songs so well and who knew so many, may have tried to write one, we cannot tell; but it was in or about the year 1793, when Burns was in the full flush of his fame, and his exertions for improving and reforming Scottish Song by providing new words for old airs had kindled her enthusiasm, that she penned her first known lyric. It was called *The Pleughman*, and was written to be sung by her brother at a dinner of the Gask tenantry. Having been successful in that form, it was afterwards circulated by him, but with every precaution for keeping it anonymous. Had Burns lived a year longer than he did, he might have heard not only of this *Pleughman*, but also of another song from the same unknown hand that would have touched him a thousand times more, as it has touched all the world since,—*The Land o' the Leal.* That song was written, it is believed, by Carolina Oliphant in 1797, when she was in her thirty-second year. Had the fact been known, how she would have been honoured and pointed at everywhere, all her life after, wherever she went! But the secret was kept; *The Land o' the Leal* came to be attributed to Burns, and was printed at last in editions of Burns as indubitably his; and the true authoress came into Edinburgh, to live in that city, close to Scott, for four-and-twenty years; and through all that time *he*, who would have limped across the room with beaming eyes to single her out in chief had he been aware of the reality, remained ignorant that the handsome, but no longer young, lady whom

he sometimes met at Ravelston had any other distinction than that of being the sister-in-law of Sandy Keith, and the wife of Major Nairne, Assistant-Inspector-General of Barracks. Yet this very time of her residence in Edinburgh as Mrs. Nairne was the time also, it appears, of the production of not a few additional songs of hers, some of them nearly as popular, with all or most of which Scott must have been familiar. Here particularly it was that in 1821, as we learn from the slight memoirs of her now extant, she, in concert with a small committee of other Edinburgh ladies, all sworn to secrecy, became a contributor, under the name of "Mrs. Bogan of Bogan" or under other *aliases*, to a collection of national airs, called *The Scottish Minstrel*, brought out in parts by Mr. Robert Purdie, a music-publisher of the city. She continued to contribute; and the work was completed in six volumes in 1824, the year in which she became Baroness Nairne. Mr. Purdie himself never knew who this valuable contributor to his collection was, nor did any one else out of the circle of her most intimate lady-friends. Her own husband, Lord Nairne, I am credibly informed, remained ignorant to his dying day that his wife had been guilty of song-writing or of any other kind of literary performance. Nor was silence broken on the subject through the subsequent fifteen years of Lady Nairne's widowhood. Away in England, Ireland, or abroad, through thirteen of those years, she would still pen a little Scottish lilt occasionally, when some feeling moved her; and so till, returning to Scotland in her old age, with no one knows what memories of private sadness under her semi-aristocratic reticence and her gentle Christian faith, she lingered out her last year or two, and then died.

Her secretiveness as to the authorship of the songs that might have made her famous when living was preserved to the last. Just before her death she *had* consented that a collective edition of them should be published, but without her name. Two months after her death, when Dr. Chalmers thought himself absolved from his promise of secrecy as to the name of the donor of the £300 for his church and schools in the West Port, he announced at a public meeting that the donor, then in her grave, had been "Lady Nairne, of Perthshire." Even he cannot have then known of any other title of hers to regard; for, if he had, and if I know Dr. Chalmers, he would have added, with all the emotion of his great heart, "authoress of *The Land o' the Leal.*" It occurs to me sometimes that in that very year 1844, when this Scottishwoman of genius was on her last visit to Edinburgh, and in occasional conferences with Dr. Chalmers in his house in Morningside, I might myself have seen her in his company or neighbourhood. But, with the rest of the world, I knew nothing then of her literary claims; and, when I read or heard *The Land o' the Leal*, I thought the words were by Burns.

Only since 1846, the year after Lady Nairne's death, can she be said to have taken her place by name in the literature of her country. In that year, her surviving sister Mrs. Keith thinking there could be nothing wrong now in letting the truth be known, there appeared the projected collective edition of the songs in the form of a thin folio, with this title-page: "*Lays from Strathearn, by Caroline, Baroness Nairne, Author of 'The Land o' the Leal,' etc.: Arranged, with Symphonies and Accompaniments, for the Pianoforte, by Finlay Dun.*" In a subsequent edition several

pieces that had been omitted in this one were added; and now perhaps the most complete collection of the songs is that edited by Dr. Charles Rogers in 1869 in a small volume containing the words without the music, and having a memoir prefixed. The number of pieces there printed as Lady Nairne's is ninety-eight in all.

What strikes one first on looking at the ninety-eight is the variety of their moods and subjects, the versatility of mind they exhibit. There are Jacobite songs; and, what is remarkable in one brought up in Jacobite sentiments and traditions, there are songs of sympathy with Knox, the Covenanters, and the old Scottish Presbyterians and Whigs, the very contradictories of Scottish Jacobitism. Then there are love-songs, satirical songs, humorous songs and songs of Scottish character and oddity, nonsense songs and songs of philosophic "pawkiness" and good sense, songs of scenery and places, and songs of the most tearful pathos. A few are of a distinctively religious character. Passing from matter or subject to quality, one may say that there is a real *moral* worth in them all, and that all have that genuine characteristic of a song which consists of an inner *tune* preceding and inspiring the words, and coiling the words as it were out of the heart along with it. Hence there is not perhaps one of them that, with the advantage they have of being set to known and favourite airs, would not please sufficiently if sung by a good singer. Apart from this general melodiousness or suitability for being sung, the report for *all* of them might not be so favourable; but, tried by the standard of strict poetic merit, about twenty or twenty-five of the whole number, I should say, might rank as good, while eight or ten of these

are of supreme quality. Would not this, though written by a woman, serve for the rallying of a thousand men for any cause, right or wrong?

"The news frae Moidart cam yestreen
Will soon gar mony ferly,
For ships o' war hae just come in
And landit Royal Charlie.
Come through the heather, around him gather;
Ye're a' the welcomer early;
Around him cling wi' a' your kin;
For wha'll be King but Charlie?
Come through the heather, around him gather,
Come Ronald, come Donald, come a' thegither,
And crown your rightfu', lawfu' King!
For wha'll be King but Charlie?"

And what a *birr* and sense of the situation in the song on Charlie's entry into Carlisle preceded by a hundred pipers, though that, on the whole, is not one of the best:—

"Dumfoundered, the English saw, they saw;
Dumfoundered, they heard the blaw, the blaw;
Dumfoundered, they a' ran awa, awa,
From the hundred pipers an' a', an' a'.
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a',
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a',
We'll up and gie them a blaw, a blaw,
Wi' a hundred pipers an' a', an' a'."

Then, in the way of humorous character-sketching, what can surpass the *Laird o' Cockpen*, or the immortal *John Tod*? So well known are these throughout Scotland that it would be absurd to quote them if only Scottish readers were concerned; but, for the convenience of other readers, here they are, each entire:—

THE LAIRD O' COCKPEN.

"The Laird o' Cockpen, he's proud and he's great;
His mind is ta'en up wi' the things o' the state:
He wanted a wife his braw house to keep;
But favour wi' wooin' was fashious to seek.

Doun by the dyke-side a lady did dwell;
At his table-head he thocht she'd look well:
McClish's ae dochter o' Claverse-ha' Lea,—
A pennyless lass wi' a lang pedigree.

His wig was weel pouther'd, and as guid as new;
His waistcoat was white, and his coat it was blue;
He put on a ring, a sword, and cock'd hat:
And wha could refuse the Laird wi' a' that?

He took the gray mare and rade cannilie,
And rapp'd at the yett o' Claverse-ha' Lea:
'Gae tell Mistress Jean to come speedily ben;
She's wanted to speak wi' the Laird o' Cockpen.'

Mistress Jean she was makin' the elder-flower wine:
'And what brings the Laird at sic a like time?'
She put aff her apron, and on her silk goun,
Her mutch wi' red ribbons, and gaed awa' doun.

And, when she cam ben, he bowed fu' low;
And what was his errand he soon let her know:
Amazed was the Laird when the lady said '*Na*,'
And wi' a laich curtsey she turned awa'.

Dumfoundered he was, but nae sigh did he gie:
He mounted his mare, and he rade cannilie;
And aften he thocht, as he gaed through the glen,
'She's daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen!'"

JOHN TOD.

"He's a terrible man, John Tod, John Tod;
He's a terrible man, John Tod.
He scolds in the house; he scolds at the door;
He scolds in the vera high road, John Tod;
He scolds in the vera high road.

The weans a' fear John Tod, John Tod;
The weans a' fear John Tod:
When he's passing by, the mithers will cry:—
'Here's an ill wean, John Tod, John Tod;
Here's an ill wean, John Tod.'

The callants a' fear John Tod, John Tod;
The callants a' fear John Tod:
If they steal but a neep, the laddie he'll whip;
And it's unco' weel done o' John Tod, John Tod;
And it's unco' weel done o' John Tod.

And saw ye nae wee John Tod, John Tod?
O saw ye nae wee John Tod?
His bannet was blue, his shoon maistly new;
And weel does he keep the kirk road, John Tod;
And weel does he keep the kirk road.

How is he fendin', John Tod, John Tod?
How is he fendin', John Tod?
He's scourin' the land wi' a rung in his hand,
And the French wadna frichten John Tod, John Tod;
And the French wadna frichten John Tod.

Ye're sun-brint and battered, John Tod, John Tod;
Ye're tautit and tattered, John Tod:
Wi' your auld strippit coul, ye look maist like a fule,
But there's *nous* i' the lining, John Tod, John Tod;
But there's *nous* i' the lining, John Tod.

He's weel respeckit, John Tod, John Tod;
He's weel respeckit, John Tod:
He's a terrible man; but we'd a' gae wrang
If e'er he sud leave us, John Tod, John Tod;
If e'er he sud leave us, John Tod."

Again, in another key, how would Edinburgh, how would Newhaven, how would all the coasts of the Forth, like to lose that famous song of the fisher-women, written long ago for Neil Gow, and sent to him anonymously for the purposes of his concerts?

"Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're bonnie fish and halesome farin'.
Wha'll buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth?
When ye were sleepin' on your pillows,
Dreamed ye aught o' our puir fellows,
Darkling as they faced the billows,
A' to fill the woven willows?
Buy my caller herrin',
New drawn frae the Forth.
Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
They're no brocht here without brave darin':
Buy my caller herrin',
Hauled through wind and rain.

Wha'll buy my caller herrin'?
Oh! ye may ca' them vulgar farin':
Wives and mithers, maist despairin',
Ca' them lives o' men."

Yet in another strain take this little advice of ethical wisdom, which, simple though it is, might have been written by Goethe:—

"Saw ye ne'er a lanely lassie,
Thinkin', gin she were a wife,
The sun o' joy wad ne'er gae doun,
But warm and cheer her a' her life?
Saw ye ne'er a weary wifie,
Thinkin', gin she were a lass,
She wad aye be blithe and cheery,
Lightly as the day wad pass?

Wives and lasses, young and aged,
Think na on each other's state:
Ilka ane it has its crosses;
Mortal joy was ne'er complete.
Ilka ane it has its blessings;
Peevish dinna pass them by;
But, like choicest berries, seek them,
Though amang the thorns they lie."

Another and another still might be quoted, each with its peculiarity, hardly any two alike; and I am not sure but some of those that would be selected as of the highest quality were among the earliest. Certainly among the very earliest was that with which Lady Nairne's name will ever be most fondly associated, though even that can hardly be called a song of her youth. While there is death in the world, and the heart will think of what may be beyond death, or the tears will come at the thought of parting with loved ones, or at the memory of their vanished faces in the mystic musings of the night, will not this song, wherever the Scottish tongue is spoken, be the very music of resignation struggling with heart-break?—

"I'm wearin' awa', Jean,
Like snaw-wreaths in thaw, Jean,
I'm wearin' awa'
To the land o' the leal.
There's nae sorrow there, Jean;
There's neither cauld nor care, Jean;
The day is aye fair
In the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairn's there, Jean;
She was baith gude and fair, Jean;
And oh! we grudged her sair
To the land o' the leal.
But sorrow's sel' wears past, Jean;
And joy's a-comin' fast, Jean,
The joy that's aye to last
In the land o' the leal.

Then dry that tearfu' e'e, Jean;
My soul langs to be free, Jean;
And angels wait on me
To the land o' the leal.
Now, fare ye weel, my ain Jean!
This warld's care is vain, Jean;
We'll meet and aye be fain
In the land o' the leal."

In quoting this song I have given the words as it has been universally voted, by men at least, that they should be accepted. Lady Nairne wrote "I'm wearin' awa', *John*," meaning the song to be the supposed address of a dying wife to her husband; and so the words still stand, with other differences of text, in the authentic original. I know not by what warrant the change was introduced; though, for my own part, I join in the vote for adopting it, and so making the song the address of a dying husband to his wife. Had there been such a various reading in the text of one of the odes of Horace, what comments there would have been upon it, what dissertations! But, though the song of *The Land o' the Leal* is more touching than any in Horace,

the modification of its original form has passed hitherto without much comment. The most obvious comment perhaps is that, whatever *Jean* may produce, it will be appropriated by *John*, if he likes it, to his own use.

EDINBURGH THROUGH THE DUNDAS DESPOTISM[1]

Will anybody give us a history of Scotland from the year 1745 onwards to the present time? It is not likely that anybody will. For it is precisely from the year 1745 that Scotland ceases to have that sort of history which, according to our ordinary ideas of history, it is easy or necessary to write.

Some forty years before that time, Scotland had parted with her independent autonomy by the Treaty of Union. There was an end of "an auld sang"; and the smaller country, though nominally only united to the larger, was virtually, for purposes of general history, incorporated with it. Scotsmen have recently been complaining that Literature has not even paid Scotland the poor compliment of remembering the fact of her union with England so far as to use the word "Britain," then specially provided by law as the designation of the composite kingdom, but has gone on speaking of "England" and "English History," as if the linking of the smaller country to the larger had produced no change of fact worth commemorating by a change of name. The practice is as unscholarly as it is unconstitutional, and is a recent and violent

[1] Reprinted, with some modifications, from the *Westminster Review* for Oct.-Dec. 1856; where it appeared, with the title "Edinburgh Fifty Years Ago," in the form of an article on Lord Cockburn's "Memorials of Edinburgh," then just published.

departure from the established usage of the best English writers of the eighteenth century and the earlier part of the present. But the continuity of English life *was* too little disturbed perhaps by the mere admission into the Parliament at Westminster of sixteen peers and forty-five members for counties and burghs from the other side of the Tweed, to make it reasonable to expect that all Englishmen would for ever thenceforth keep to the correct and legal usage, employing the words "England" and "English" only in their proper historical senses, but saying "Britain," "British," "Britannic," etc., whenever the aggregate unity should be in view. It was actually proposed, in the first draft of an inscription to be engraved on a public memorial to a famous statesman recently deceased, to include among his mentioned distinctions that of his having been "twice Prime Minister of England"; and the absurdity had to be stopped by pointing out that for several ages there had been no such office or entity anywhere in the world. Even patriotic Scottish writers,—for example, Sir Archibald Alison,—have given way to the habit of using the word "England" for the conjunct community oftener than the legal word "Britain." Apart, however, from all controversy in the matter of names, it is plain that from the date of the Union Scotsmen themselves have considered their national history, in all ordinary senses, as then concluded. Our text-books of Scottish History close at the year 1707. For about forty years after that date, indeed, Scotland contrived by vigorous exertions to make her separate existence still felt. The fierce flutter of the tartans in the two Rebellions of 1715 and 1745 drew the historians hurriedly back to her after they thought they had done with her; and so

it is not uncommon in books of Scottish History to find the narrative continued, by way of appendix, as far as to 1745. But then the historian takes his final leave. With the furious Cumberland and the Government whom Cumberland served, he scatters the tartans for the last time; he breaks up the Highlands by forts and roads; he abolishes hereditary jurisdictions; he grubs up, so to speak, all the roots and relics of the old Scottish autonomy which since the Union had been left in the ground and had proved troublesome; and, when he turns his back on Scotland again, it is with an assurance that he will never be recalled, and that from that hour all on the north side of the Border will be, like cleared land, left quiet and fallow. Scotland *is*, then, thought of as but a part of Great Britain.

And yet, in another sense, what do we see? Why, that this very period of the historical non-existence of Scotland is the period of her most energetic, most peculiar, and most various life! What Scotland was in the world before 1745 is as nothing compared with what, even purely as Scotland, she has been in the world since 1745. Till 1745 she was cooped up within herself, a narrow nation leading a life of intense internal action; and the most thrilling facts of her history,—such as the Wars of Independence against England, and the Presbyterian Reformation under Knox,—were of a kind the contemporaneous interest of which was confined within her own bounds. Even after the Union of the Crowns in 1603, it was only indirectly and collaterally, as in the Scottish episodes of the Great Civil War and its sequel, that the influence of Scotland in general history became very notable. But since 1745 the Scottish element has visibly acquired a proportion in the general mass of

things which it never had before. Not only since that period has Scotland still stood where it did, inhabited by the same race of men, living on according to their old habits, and the same in all respects, their lost autonomy excepted; not only, therefore, has there been a distinct history of Scottish society since that time, capable of being written by itself, if any one chose to take up the subject: but the circumstance that at that time Scotland burst its bounds has reacted on its history, so as vastly to increase its dimensions, and in many ways also to vary its character. Since 1745, Scotland has quadrupled her population. The commercial prosperity of Scotland, with all that this involves, dates from the same period. It is since that period that Scotland has sent forth most of that series of eminent men who have left their names memorable in the various walks of active and industrial life, at home and abroad. From that period, with some allowance for those numerous Scottish thinkers who taught philosophy in the European Universities in earlier centuries, dates the rise and development of what is known as the Scottish Philosophy. From that period, still more conspicuously, dates the manifestation of Scottish intellect, in any degree compelling attention beyond Scottish limits, in the departments of literature and art. Before 1745, if we except the poet Thomson (for only recently have English literary historians reverted with any adequate interest to the older poetry and other literature of the real Scottish vernacular), Scotland had not given birth to a single poet or other man of letters able to command distinct recognition by his English contemporaries. It was precisely about this time, however, that such men as Hume and Smollett, and Robertson and Adam Smith, and Blair and Kames,—

all of them born after the Union, and most of them between the two Rebellions,—began that literary activity of the Scottish mind which, kept up by such of their immediate successors as Burns, Henry Mackenzie, and Dugald Stewart, has been continued, with ever-increasing effect, to our own time, by writers whose name is legion. In short, however we look at the matter, it is a remarkable fact that the most productive period of the History of Scotland is that which has elapsed since Cumberland tore the last relics of autonomy out of her soil, and left her, passive and Parliamentless, to the mere winds and meteors.

One reason why, despite this interesting progress of Scottish society since 1745, the Scottish history of the intervening period has not been written is that, according to our common notions, only where there is autonomy can there be proper history. It is over parliaments, monarchs, and seats of government, with an occasional excursion after embassies or in the route of armies to great battle-fields, that the Muse of History hovers; where there is no parliament, monarch, or seat of government, and no embassy or march of armies to make up for the want, she finds it unnecessary to stay, and thinks it sufficient if she leaves other and minor muses as her substitutes. Hence, as we have said, the Muse of History left Scotland in 1707, and returned only hastily and on compulsion to attend to the Highland Rebellions. Whatever claim on her attention Scotland since that time has possessed she considers herself to have amply satisfied by hovering over the Parliament of Westminster, as the centre of British interests in general, or by following those trains of military and international action, emanating from that centre, in

which Scotsmen have had part side by side with Englishmen and Irishmen. The task of recording purely Scottish events in their sequence during the last hundred and fifty years,—of taking note of all the flitting social phenomena of which during that period the land north of the Tweed has been the scene,—has accordingly devolved on the muse of individual biography, aided by the muse of economical dissertation and statistics; and it seems somewhat problematical, as has been said, whether the materials which these subordinate muses have gathered, in the shape of miscellaneous lives of remarkable Scotsmen since 1745, and miscellaneous sketches of Scottish life and society since then, will ever be organised into a regular History. To a writer capable of combining the scattered elements of interest lying in such materials the thing would certainly be possible.

Of the various recent works having anything of the character of contributions to a history of Scottish society during the period in question, the richest by far, both in fact and in suggestion, are the two which bear the name of the late Lord Cockburn. Rich enough in this respect was his *Life of Jeffrey* published in 1852; but richer still are the *Memorials of his Time*, now published posthumously.

Lord Cockburn was born in 1779, and died in 1854. Consequently, it is not over the whole of the period under notice, but only over seventy years of it, that his reminiscences could in any case have extended. In fact, however, the period over which they do extend is still more limited. The *Memorials* begin about the year 1787, when the author was a boy at school, and they do not come farther down than 1830. We think, too, that all readers of the

volume will agree with us in regarding the earlier portion of it,—that which contains Lord Cockburn's recollections of the time of his boyhood and youth,—as by far the most interesting. Nowhere else is there such a vivid and racy account of the state of Scottish society from about 1790 to about 1806. Fixing on the latter year, and remembering that Lord Cockburn's recollections refer chiefly to Scottish society as it was represented in Edinburgh, we have in these "Memorials," therefore, the best text possible for our present paper.

First of all, the *Memorials*, taken in connection with the *Life of Jeffrey*, bring more distinctly before us than had ever been done previously, or, at all events, since the time of the Reform Bill agitation, the anomalous system of polity by which Scotland was governed not so very long ago. Such a system of polity, maintained so quietly and with such results, was probably never seen elsewhere under the sun. Nominally, Scotland was under a free representative government; but actually she was under the absolute rule of a single native. Ever since the Union of 1707, when the Scottish autonomy ended and Westminster became the seat of the one Imperial Government for England and Scotland together, that Government, except in a few instances when attempts were made to rule Scotland directly by English methods, and the attempts raised storm and whirlwind, had found it convenient to entrust the sole management of Scottish affairs to a single minister, who, by his Scottish birth and connections on the one hand, and his connections with the Cabinet and the Parliament at Westminster on the other, could act as a kind of responsible middleman. Knowing the character and habits of his countrymen, he

could carry out the intentions of Government in Scotland far better than Government could do for itself; and, by his command of the Scottish votes in Parliament, he could serve the Cabinet in British and Imperial questions so effectively as to be able to dictate to it in all purely Scottish questions. This kind of depute-sovereignty, or rule by contract, was long exercised in Scotland by the powerful Whig family of Argyle. During the Whig and Tory alternations of the early part of the reign of George III., however, the sovereignty was shifted from the Argyle family to others, till at last, about the time of the formation of the ministry of the younger Pitt in 1783, it settled permanently in the Tory family of Dundas, whose patrimonial property as lairds, and whose professional craft as lawyers, connected them more immediately with Edinburgh.

For two centuries or more these "Dundases of Arniston," as they were called and are still called, had been an important family in the politics and the jurisprudence of Scotland. Since the Restoration four of them in succession had been on the Scottish Bench, two of these in the supreme place on that Bench: viz. Robert Dundas, Lord President of the Court of Session from 1748 to 1753, and his eldest son, Robert Dundas, Lord President of the same from 1760 onwards. It was in a younger brother of this last that the family was to start up into its highest distinction. This was Henry Dundas, known afterwards as 1st Viscount Melville. Born in 1741, and educated at the University of Edinburgh, he had betaken himself, like so many of his ancestors, to the profession of the Law, and had already become eminent at the Scottish Bar, when, having been sent to the House of Commons as

member for Edinburghshire, he began in 1774 his career of Parliament-man and party-politician. It was the time of the Tory administration of Lord North; and, having gradually fallen into rank with the supporters of that administration, he was appointed under it in 1775 to the office of Lord Advocate of Scotland. He had held this office through the remainder of Lord North's administration, and also through the brief Rockingham and Shelburne ministries of 1782-83, latterly with the Treasurership of the Navy in addition, but had resigned office in April 1783 on the formation of the Coalition Ministry of North and Fox. He had been observing with admiration the steady conduct of the youthful Pitt through so many shiftings of the political scenery; the youthful Pitt had also been observing *him*; they had found an unusually strong bond of attachment to each other in their common fondness for port wine and their coequal powers of consuming it in large quantities; and so it happened that, on the break-up of the Coalition Ministry in December 1783, and the formation of a new and more lasting ministry under Pitt himself, it was to Dundas that Pitt looked chiefly for help and comradeship. Pitt was then but four and twenty years of age, while Dundas was in his forty-third year; but through all the future Premiership of the younger man, and indeed through all the rest of his life, Dundas was to be his most trusted colleague, his *alter ego*.

From 1783 to 1806 this Henry Dundas, the colleague of Pitt, was virtually King of Scotland. When the history of Scotland during that period shall come to be written, this will be recognised and he will be the central figure. All in all, though within a narrower field, he was as remarkable a man, as able a

man, as either Pitt or Fox; and his life, from the absoluteness with which it was identified with the career of his native country during so long a period, possesses elements of biographical interest which theirs want. Both Lord Brougham and Lord Cockburn have sketched the character of this important man, of whom, in their youth, Scotsmen were continually speaking as subjects speak of their liege lord. In the House, says Lord Brougham, he could not be called an orator; he was "a plain, business-like speaker," and "an admirable man of business." Personally, Lord Brougham adds, he was of "engaging qualities"; "a steady and determined friend"; "an agreeable companion, from the joyous hilarity of his manners"; "void of all affectation, all pride, all pretension"; "a kind and affectionate man in the relations of private life"; "in his demeanour hearty and good-humoured to all." Lord Cockburn, as became a nephew speaking of an uncle, is even more enthusiastic in his descriptions. "Handsome, gentlemanlike, frank, cheerful, and social," says Lord Cockburn, "he was a favourite with most men, and with all women"; "too much a man of the world not to live well with his opponents when they would let him, and totally incapable of personal harshness or unkindness." "He was," continues Lord Cockburn, "the very man for Scotland at that time, and is a Scotchman of whom his country may be proud." Such was the Henry Dundas in whom, partly because of those personal qualifications, the entire management of Scottish affairs was vested through the seventeen closing years of last century and the first five or six years of the present. This era of Scottish history may, in fact, be remembered by the name of The Dundas Despotism.

What was the method of the despotism? It was very peculiar, and at the same time very simple and natural. Mr. Dundas, sitting in the House of Commons, first as member for the shire of Edinburgh, but from 1787 onwards as member for Edinburgh itself, was a leading power in the Pitt Administration. On joining that administration he had not resumed his old office of Lord Advocate (which was given to his friend Ilay Campbell), but had been content with resuming his former post of the Treasurership of the Navy; to which were subsequently added in succession the Presidency of the Board of Control for Indian Affairs (*i.e.* the Ministry for India), the Home-Secretaryship, the Secretaryship for War, and the First Lordship of the Admiralty. It was perhaps as Minister for India that he most usefully distinguished himself in his capacity as a British statesman. But it was in his other capacity as sovereign minister for Scotland that he laboured most characteristically. Continually going and coming, shuttle-wise, between London and Edinburgh, he was known to carry all Scotland in his pocket. His colleagues, on the one hand, made Scotland entirely over to him; and he, on the other, contracted to keep Scotland quiet for them, and to give them the full use of the united Scottish influence in Parliament. His means, as regarded his countrymen, were very efficient. They consisted, apart from the mere power of his own tact and talent, in the uncontrolled use of patronage. The population of Scotland at that time did not exceed a million and a half,—a population in which, according to the ordinary calculation, there could not be more than about three hundred and fifty thousand adult males. This was a nice little compact body to keep

in order, and not above one man's strength, if he had offices enough at his disposal. But it was not even necessary to deal with all this little mass directly. There was no popular representation in Scotland. Fifteen out of the five-and-forty Scottish members of the House of Commons were members for burghs; and these were elected by the town-councils, who were themselves self-elected, and nearly permanent. Nay, the Edinburgh town-council alone returned a member directly; the other burgh-members were for "districts of burghs," and were elected by delegates from the various town-councils included in the several districts. The county constituencies, on the other hand, who elected the thirty county members, did not exceed fifteen hundred or two thousand persons for all Scotland. Accordingly, Government, through Dundas, had only to deal directly with an upper two thousand or so, including the town-councils,—a body not too large, as Lord Cockburn says, to be held completely within Government's hand. Gratitude for places conferred, fear of removal from place, and hope of places to be obtained for themselves and their relations or dependents, were the forces by which they *were* held. Nobody could get a place or could hold a place except through Harry Dundas; and he had places enough at his disposal to give all the necessary chance. There was, first, all the patronage of Scotland itself, including judgeships, sheriffships, professorships, clerical livings, offices of customs and excise, and a host of minor appointments, all within the control of Dundas, to be distributed by him according to his personal knowledge, or the representations of his friends. Then there were commissions in the army and navy, appointments

in the India service, medical appointments, and posts in the various departments of the public service in England,—all excellent as openings for young Scotsmen who could not be provided for at home, and in the patronage of which Dundas had his full share by official right or as a member of the general Ministry. The political faith of Scotland was, therefore, simply *Dundasism*; and it was in a great measure the result of Dundas's own political position that this *Dundasism* was equivalent to *Toryism*. As the colleague and friend of Pitt, the member of a government whose main feeling was hatred to the French Revolution, and to everything at home that savoured of sympathy with that Revolution, Dundas willed that his subjects should be Tories; and they were. At last Toryism became the ingrained national habit. Lord Cockburn describes feelingly the utter political abjectness of Scotland during the Dundas reign. As in England, so in Scotland, "everything rung and was connected "with the Revolution in France; everything, not this "or that thing, but literally everything, was soaked "in this one event." But in Scotland, more than in England, horror of the French Revolution and of every doctrine or practice that could be charged with the remotest suspicion of connection with it, became the necessary creed of personal safety. To resent every idea of innovation or of popular power,—nay, every recognition of the existence of the people politically,—as blasphemy, Jacobinism, and incipient treason, was the same thing as allegiance to Dundas; and this, again, was the same thing as having any comfort in life. Hence, three-fourths of the entire population, and almost all the wealth and rank of the country, were of the Tory party; and no names

of abuse were hard enough, no persecution was harsh enough, for the daring men, consisting perhaps of about a fourth of the middle and working classes, with a sprinkling of persons of a higher grade, who formed the small Opposition. Though the opinions of these were of the most moderate shade of what would now be called "liberalism," the slightest expression of them was attended with positive risk. Spies were employed to watch such of them as had any social position ; in several cases there were trials for sedition, with sentences of transportation ; and only the impossibility of finding grounds for indictment prevented more. The negative punishment of exclusion from office, and from every favour of Government and its supporters, was the least ; and it was universally applied. Burns nearly lost his excisemanship for too free speaking ; and a letter is extant, addressed by him to one of the commissioners of the Scottish Board of Excise, in which, without denying his Liberalism, he protests that it is within the bounds of devout attachment to the Constitution, and implores the commissioner, as "a husband and a father" himself, not to be instrumental in turning him, with his wife and his little ones, "into the world, degraded and disgraced." Part of the poet's crime seems to have been his having subscribed to an Edinburgh Liberal paper which had been started by one Captain Johnstone. This Johnstone was imprisoned after the publication of a few numbers ; and the very printer of the paper, though himself a Tory, was nearly ruined by his connection with it. No subsequent attempt was made during the Dundas reign to establish an Opposition newspaper. From 1795 to as late as 1820, according to Lord Cockburn, not a single public

meeting on the Opposition side of politics was, or could be, held in Edinburgh. Elections of members of Parliament, whether for burghs or for counties, in Scotland, were a farce: they were transacted quietly, by those whose business it was, in town-halls or in the private rooms of hotels; and the people knew of the matter only by the ringing of a bell, or by some other casual method of announcement. Abject Toryism, or submission to Dundas and the existing order of things, pervaded every department and every corner of established or official life in Scotland,—the Church, the Bench, the Bar, the Colleges and Schools; and so powerfully were any elements of possible opposition that did exist kept down by the pressure of organised self-interest, and by the fear of pains and penalties, that the appearance at last from the Solway to Caithness was that of imperturbable political stagnation.

Once, indeed, a crisis occurred which put the Scottish people nearly out in their calculations. This was in March 1801, when Pitt resigned office, and Dundas along with him, and a new ministry was formed under Pitt's temporary substitute, Mr. Addington, afterwards Lord Sidmouth. Dundas out of power was a conception totally new to the Scottish mind,—an association, or rather a dissociation, of ideas utterly paralysing. "For a while," says Lord Brougham, "all was uncertainty and consternation; "all were seen fluttering about like birds in an eclipse "or a thunderstorm; no man could tell whom he "might trust; nay, worse still, no man could tell "of whom he might ask anything." Dundasism, which had hitherto meant participation in place and patronage, now seemed in danger of losing that

meaning; and the bulk of the Scottish population feared that they might have to choose between the name and the thing. They were faithful to Dundas, however; and they were rewarded. The Addington ministry, which had come into power principally to conclude peace with France by the Treaty of Amiens, came to an end after that Treaty had been rendered nugatory by the recommencement of the war; and in May 1804 Pitt returned to the helm. Dundas, who had in the interim been raised to the peerage by the title of Viscount Melville, then resumed his place in his friend's cabinet, to yield his Parliamentary service thenceforward in the Upper House, and official service mainly in the First Lordship of the Admiralty. Scotland then rolled herself up comfortably once more for her accustomed slumber,—the only difference being that her bedside guardian had to be thought of no longer as her Harry Dundas, but less familiarly now as her Lord Melville. So for another year; but then what a reawakening! It was in April 1805 that, in consequence of the report of a Committee of the House of Commons that had been appointed for the investigation of alleged abuses in the naval service, the Whigs, through Mr. Whitbread as their spokesman, opened an attack on Lord Melville on charges of malversation of office, and misappropriation of public moneys, during his former Treasurership of the Navy, either directly, or by collusion with his principal financial subordinate. The attack grew fiercer and fiercer, as well as more extensive in its scope; and, although it was evidently inspired mainly by the political vindictiveness of a party made furious by long exclusion from office, it became more formidable from the fact that some of Pitt's own friends either abetted it fully or thought

that the irregularities in account-keeping which had been disclosed ought not to pass without Parliamentary censure. Pitt reeled under such a blow at once to his private feelings and his administration; and, after doing his best to resist, he had to consent that Lord Melville should quit office, and that Lord Melville's name should be struck off from the list of His Majesty's Privy Council till the charges against him were formally and publicly tried. The trial was to be in the shape of an impeachment before the House of Lords. Before it could come on Pitt was dead. He died on the 23d of January 1806; and the long-excluded Whigs had then their turn of power for somewhat more than a year in what is remembered as the Fox and Grenville ministry,—a name accurate only till the 13th of September 1806, when Fox followed his great rival to the grave, and Lord Grenville became Premier singly. It was in April and May 1806, when this Fox and Grenville ministry was new in office, that the great trial of Lord Melville in Westminster Hall was begun and concluded. The charges against him had been formulated into ten articles; and he was acquitted upon all the ten, —unanimously on the only one which vitally impeached his personal integrity, by overwhelming majorities on five of the others, and by smaller but still decisive majorities on the remaining four. On the whole, it was a triumphant acquittal; and it was received as such throughout Scotland,—where, at one of the dinners held in honour of the event by the jubilant Scottish Tories, there was sung a famous song beginning with this stanza:—

"Since here we are set in array round the table,
Five hundred good fellows well met in a hall,

Come listen, brave boys, and I'll sing as I'm able
How innocence triumphed and pride got a fall.
But push round the claret,—
Come, stewards, don't spare it;
With rapture you'll drink to the toast that I give:
Here, boys,
Off with it merrily:
'Melville for ever, and long may he live!'"

Melville did live for some time longer, restored to his place in the Privy Council, and rehabilitated in honour, but never again in office, hardly caring to concern himself further with politics, and spending his last years mainly in Scotland. He died on the 27th of May 1811, in the seventieth year of his age.

That system of the government of Scotland by proconsulship of which he had been so conspicuously the representative did not by any means die with him. It was continued, with variations and modifications, through those successive ministries of the later part of the reign of George III. and the whole of the reign of George IV. which fill up the interval between the death of Pitt and the eve of the Reform Bill; nay, not only so continued, but continued with the accompanying phenomenon that it was still a Dundas that exercised, occasionally at least, what did remain of the proconsulship. Robert Dundas, 2d Viscount Melville, who died as late as 1851, was a member of most of the successive administrations mentioned, from Perceval's of 1809-12, through Liverpool's of 1812-27, to Canning's and the Duke of Wellington's of 1827-30, holding one or other of his father's old posts in these administrations, and so or otherwise maintaining the hereditary Dundas influence in Scottish affairs while Toryism kept the field. But, while this prolongation of the Dundas influence in the second Lord Melville

is not to be forgotten, it is the father, Henry Dundas, 1st Lord Melville, that has left the name of Dundas most strikingly impressed upon the history of Scotland, and it is the stretch of two-and-twenty years between 1783 and 1806, during which this greatest of the Dundases exercised the proconsulship, that has to be remembered especially and distinctively in Scottish annals as the time of the Dundas Despotism.

"The Dundas Despotism!" O phrase of fear, unpleasing to a modern ear! What a Scotland that must have been which this phrase describes! A country without political life, without public meetings, without newspapers, without a hustings: could any endurable existence be led in such a set of conditions, —could any good come out of it?

Incredible as it may seem, there is evidence that the Scottish people did contrive, in some way or other, to lead not only an endurable but a very substantial and jolly existence through the Dundas Despotism, and that not only a great deal of good, but much of what Scotland must now regard as her best and most characteristic produce, had its genesis in that time, though the exodus has been later. The various liberties of the human subject may be classified and arranged according to their degrees of importance; and a great many of them may exist where the liberty of voting for members of parliament and of openly talking politics is absent. So it was in Scotland through the reign of Henry Dundas and his Toryism. The million and a half of human beings who then composed Scotland, and were scattered over its surface, in their various parishes, agricultural or pastoral, and in their towns and villages, went through their daily

life with a great deal of energy and enjoyment, notwithstanding that Dundas, and the lairds and the provosts and bailies as his agents, elected the members of parliament and transacted all the political business of the country; nay, out of the lairds and the bailies themselves, and all the business of electioneering, they extracted a good deal of fun. What mattered it to them that now and then some long-tongued fellow who had started a newspaper was stowed away in jail, or that an Edinburgh lawyer like Muir was transported for being incontinent in his politics? Could not people let well alone, obey the authorities, earn their oatmeal, and drink their whisky in peace? Few of Scott's novels come down so far as to this period of Scottish life, and it has not been much described in our other literature of fiction; but till lately there were many alive who remembered it, and delighted in recalling its savageries and its humours. O the old Scottish times of the lairds, the "moderate" ministers, the provosts and the bailies!—the lairds speaking broad Scotch, farming their own lands, carousing together, seeing their daughters married, and writing to London for appointments for their sons; the "moderate" ministers making interest for *their* sons, preaching "Blair and cauld morality" on Sundays, and jogging to christenings or to Presbytery dinners through the week; the provosts and bailies in their shops in the forenoon, or meeting in the morning at their "deid-chack" after a man was hanged! Every considerable town then had its hangman, who was frequently a well-to-do person that sold fish or some such commodity. And then, all through society, the flirtations, the friendships, and the long winter evenings at the fireside, with the cracks between the "gudeman" and his neighbours, and the alterna-

tive of a hand at cards or a well-thumbed book for the young folks! What stalwart old fellows, both of the douce and of the humorous type, oracular and respected in their day, and whose physiognomies and maxims are still preserved in local memory, lived and died in those days and made them serve their turn! Nay, of the Scotsmen who have been eminent in the intellectual world, what a number belong by their birth to the reign of Dundas, and were nurtured amid its torpid influences! Burns closed his life in the midst of it; Dugald Stewart and James Watt lived through it; Scott, Jeffrey, Chalmers, Wilson, Hamilton, and Carlyle are all, more or less, specimens of what it could send forth. *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*: there was pith in Scotland before there was Parliamentary Reform.

Naturally it was in Edinburgh that the various elements of Scottish life at this time were seen in their closest contact and their most intimate union or antagonism. It was here that Dundas lived when he was in Scotland; and here were the central threads of that official network by which, through Dundas, Scotland was connected with the English Government. Edinburgh was then still the chief city of Scotland, even in population; for, though now Glasgow has far outstripped it in that particular, then the two cities were happy in numbering little more than 80,000 each. At least, in the census of 1801 Edinburgh stands for 82,000, or almost exactly neck to neck with Glasgow, which stands for 83,000. Dundee, which came next, reckoned but 29,000; Aberdeen, 27,000; and Leith and Paisley each about 20,000. Few other Scottish towns had a population of more than 10,000.

Was there ever another such city to live in as Edinburgh?

> "And I forgot the clouded Forth,
> The gloom that saddens heaven and earth,
> The bitter east, the misty summer,
> And gray metropolis of the North."

One regrets that this is all that our noble Laureate's experience of Edinburgh enabled him to say. The east winds do bite there fearfully now and then, and blow a dust of unparalleled pungency in your eyes as you cross the North Bridge; but, with that exception, what a city! Gray! why, it is gray, or gray and gold, or gray and gold and blue, or gray and gold and blue and green, or gray and gold and blue and green and purple, according as the heaven pleases, and you choose your ground! But, take it when it is most sombrely gray, where is another such gray city? The irregular ridge of the Old Town, with its main street of lofty antique houses rising gradually from Holyrood up to the craggy Castle; the chasm between the Old Town and the New, showing grassy slopes by day, and glittering supernaturally with lamps at night; the New Town itself, like a second city spilt out of the Old, fairly built of stone, and stretching downwards over new heights and hollows, with gardens intermixed, till it reaches the flats of the Forth! Then Calton Hill in the midst, confronted by the precipitous curve of the Salisbury Crags; Arthur Seat looking over all like a lion grimly keeping guard; the wooded Corstorphines lying soft away to the west, and the larger Pentlands looming quiet in the southern distance! Let the sky be as gray and heavy as the absence of the sun can make it, and where have

natural situation and the hand of man combined to exhibit such a mass of the city picturesque? And only let the sun strike out, and lo! a burst of new glories in and around. The sky is then blue as sapphire overhead; the waters of the Forth are clear to the broad sea; the hills and the fields of Fife are distinctly visible from every northern street and window; still more distant peaks are discernible on either horizon; and, as day goes down, the gables and pinnacles of the old houses blaze and glance with the radiance of the sunset. It is such a city that no one, however familiar with it, can walk out in its streets for but five minutes at any hour of the day or of the night, or in any state of the weather, without a new pleasure through the eye alone. Add to this the historical associations. Remember that this is the city of ancient Scottish royalty; that there is not a close or alley in the Old Town, and hardly a street in the New, that has not memories of the great or the quaint attached to it; that the many generations of old Scottish life that have passed through it have left every stone of it, as it were, rich with legend. To an English poet all this might be indifferent; but hear the Scottish poets:—

> "Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
> All hail thy palaces and towers!"

was the salutation of Burns, when first brought from his native Ayrshire to behold the Scottish capital. "Mine own romantic town," was the outburst of Scott, in that famous passage where, after describing Edinburgh as seen from the Braids, he makes even an English stranger beside himself with rapture at the sight:—

"Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent;
As if to give his rapture vent,
The spur he to his charger lent,
And raised his bridle hand,
And, making demi-volte in air,
Cried, 'Where's the coward that would not dare
To fight for such a land?'"

Here, though it is an Englishman that is supposed to speak, it is a Scotsman that supplies the words; but there can be no such objection in the case of the following lines from a sonnet, entitled "Written in Edinburgh," by Tennyson's friend, Arthur Hallam:—

"Even thus, methinks, a city reared should be,
Yea, an imperial city, that might hold
Five times a hundred noble towns in fee . . .
Thus should her towers be raised; with vicinage
Of clear bold hills, that curve her very streets,
As if to indicate, 'mid choicest seats
Of Art, abiding Nature's majesty,—
And the broad sea beyond, in calm or rage
Chainless alike, and teaching liberty."

At the time with which we are concerned this city had the advantage of containing, as has been said, only about eighty thousand people. For comfortable social purposes, that is about the extreme size to which a city should go. The size of London is overwhelming and paralysing. There can be no intimacy, no unity of interest, in such a vast concourse. Ezekiel might be preaching in Smithfield, Camberwell might be swallowed up by an earthquake, and the people of St. John's Wood would know nothing of either fact till they saw it announced in the newspapers next morning. Hardly since the days of the Gordon Riots has London ever been all agitated simultaneously. In Ancient Athens, on the other hand, we have an illustration of what a town of moderate size could be and produce. That such a cluster of men as Pericles,

Socrates, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Plato, Phidias, Alcibiades, Xenophon, and others,—men of an order that we only expect to see now far distributed through space and time, *nantes rari in gurgite vasto*,—should have been swimming contemporaneously or nearly so in such a small pond as Athens was, and that this affluence in greatness should have been kept up by so small a population for several ages, seems miraculous. The peculiar fineness of the Hellenic nerve may have had something to do with the miracle; but the compactness of the place,—the aggregation of so many finely and variously endowed human beings precisely in such numbers as to keep up among them a daily sense of mutual companionship,—must also have had its effect. In "Modern Athens" the conditions of its ancient namesake are not *all* reproduced. To say nothing of any difference that there may be in respect of original brain-and-nerve equipment between the modern and the ancient Athenian, "Modern Athens" is, unfortunately, not a separate body-politic, with separate interests and a separate power of legislation. There are no walls now round the Edinburgh territory; nor have the Edinburgh people the privilege of making wars and concluding treaties with even the nearest portions of the rest of Great Britain. They cannot meet periodically on the Castle Esplanade to pass laws for themselves in popular assembly, and hear consummate speeches beginning "O men of Edinburgh." But, with many such differences, there are some similarities. Everybody in Edinburgh knows, or may know, everybody else, at least by sight; everybody meets everybody else in the street at least once every day or two; the whole town is within such con-

venient compass that, even to go from one extremity of it to the other extremity, there is no need to take a cab unless it rains. It is a city capable of being simultaneously and similarly affected in all its parts. An idea administered to one knot of the citizens is as good as administered to the whole community; a joke made on the Mound at noon will ripple gradually to the suburbs, and into the surrounding country, before the evening. If such is the case even now, when the population is over 260,000, must it not have been still better when the population was only 80,000, and that population was more shut in within itself by the absence as yet of telegraphs and railroads?

Moreover, the eighty thousand people who were in Edinburgh when Henry Dundas ruled Scotland were people of a rather peculiar, and yet rather superior, mixture of sorts. There never has been any very large amount of trade or of manufacture in Edinburgh, nor much of the wealth or bustle that arises from trade and manufacture. For the roar of mills and factories, and for a society ranging correspondingly from the great millionaire uppermost to crowds of operatives below, all toiling in the pursuit of wealth, one must go to Glasgow. In Edinburgh the standard of the highest income is much lower, and the standard of the lowest is perhaps higher, than in Glasgow; nor is wealth of so much relative importance in the social estimate. Roughly classified, the society of Edinburgh in the days to which we are now looking back consisted, as the society of Edinburgh still consists, of an upper stratum of lawyers and resident gentry, college officials, and clergy, reposing on, but by no means separated from, a community of shopkeepers and artisans sufficient for the wants of the place. Let

us glance at these components of the society of Old Edinburgh in succession :—

First, *The Lawyers and Resident Gentry.*—These two classes may be taken together, as to a certain extent identical. From the time of the Union, such of the old nobility of Scotland as had till then remained in their native country, occupying for a part of the year the homely but picturesque residences of their ancestors in the Old Town of Edinburgh, had gradually migrated southwards, leaving but a few families of their order to keep up their memory in the ancient capital of Holyrood and St. Giles. In the room of this ancient nobility, and, indeed, absorbing such families of the old nobility as had remained, there had sprung up,—as might have been expected from the fact that Edinburgh, though it had parted with its Court and Legislature, was still the seat of the supreme Scottish law-courts,—a new aristocracy of lawyers. The lawyers, —consisting, first, of the judges as the topmost persons, with their incomes of several thousands a year, and then of the barristers, older and younger, in practice or out of practice, but including also the numerous body of the "Writers to the Signet" and other law-agents,—are now, and for the last century or two have been, the dominant class in the Edinburgh population. From the expense attending education for the legal profession, the members of it, till within a time comparatively recent, were generally scions of Scottish families of some rank and substance; and, indeed, it was not unusual for Scottish lairds or their sons to become nominally members of the Scottish bar, even when they did not intend to practise. The fact of the substitution of the legal profession for the old Scottish aristocracy in the dominant place in Edinburgh society

is typified by the circumstance that the so-called "Parliament House,"—retaining that name because it enshrines the hall where the Estates of the Scottish Kingdom held their meetings during the last eighty years of the time when Scotland had no Parliaments but her own,—is now the seat of the supreme Scottish law-courts, and the daily resort of the interpreters of the laws in these courts. Any day yet, while the courts are in session, the Parliament House, with its long oaken ante-room, where scores of barristers in their wigs and gowns, accompanied by writers in plainer costume, are incessantly pacing up and down, and its smaller inner chambers, where the judges on the bench, in their crimson robes, are trying cases, is the most characteristic sight in Edinburgh. Even now the general hour of breakfast in Edinburgh is determined by the time when the courts open in the morning; and, dispersed through their homes, or at dinner-parties, in the evening, it is the members of the legal profession that lead the social talk. In the old Dundas days it was the same, with the addition that then the lawyers were perhaps more numerous in proportion to the rest of the community than they are now, and were more closely inter-connected by birth and marriage with the Scottish nobility and lairds.

Of hardly less importance socially was the *Academical Element*. As Edinburgh possesses a University, as its University has long been in high repute, and as, by reason of the comparative cheapness of board and education in Edinburgh, many families, after a residence in England or the Colonies, have been attracted thither for the sake of the education of their sons, or, without going thither themselves, have sent their sons thither, the business of education has always been

prominent, if not paramount, among the industries of the city. The teachers of the public and of other schools have always formed a considerable class numerically, as well as in rank; while to the University professors, partly from the higher nature of their teaching-duties, partly from the traditional dignity conferred on them by the great reputation of some of their body in past times, and partly from some superiority in their emoluments, there has alway been accorded a degree of social consideration not attached to the same function anywhere out of Scotland. The reputation of the Medical School of Edinburgh, in particular, has always invested the professors in the Medical Faculty of the University with special distinction; and, as these professors have been generally also at the head of the medical practice of the city, the Medical element, and with it the Scientific element, in Edinburgh society have from times long past been, to a considerable extent, in union with the professorial.

In all Scottish cities *The Clergy* have, from time immemorial, exercised an amount of social influence not willingly allowed to any other class of persons. This arises partly from the same causes which give the clergy influence in other parts of Britain, but partly from the peculiar affection of the Scottish people for the national theology with which they have been saturated through so many centuries of clerical teaching. In Edinburgh, in consequence of the perpetuation there of relics of that old Scottish aristocracy which never was completely brought into subjection to Presbytery, and in consequence of the presence in society of a distinct intellectual element in the lawyers, the clergy have not perhaps had, relatively, the same weight as in other towns.

Still they were powerful even in the old Edinburgh of the Dundas rule. At the very least, a negative respect was paid to them by the preservation throughout the place of an external Presbyterian decorum and strictness; and in all houses "the minister" was treated with distinction. Add to this that there generally were among the Edinburgh clergy men possessing claims to respect in addition to those belonging to their profession. Some, even in that age of "Moderatism," were remarkable for their eloquence and zeal as preachers and as pastors; others had literary pretensions; and others were professors in the University as well as parish clergymen. More, indeed, than now, the professorial and the clerical elements were then intermixed in Edinburgh. Perhaps, however, that which gave the greatest dignity to the clerical or ecclesiastical element in Edinburgh was the annual meeting in that city, every May, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In the history of Scottish society since the Union there is, perhaps, no one fact of greater importance than the regular and uninterrupted succession of those annual "General Assemblies" in Edinburgh for the discussion of the affairs of the National Church. Let an Englishman fancy that during the last two centuries there had been no Parliament in England, no meetings of the House of Lords or of the House of Commons, but that regularly during that period there had been annual convocations of representatives of the whole body of the English Clergy, together with such leading members of the laity as churchwardens or the like from all the English parishes, and that these convocations had sat ten days in every year, discussing all public matters in any way bearing on the Church, and making laws affecting the entire ecclesiastical organis-

ation of England, and he will have an idea of the extent to which the national history of Scotland since her union with England is bound up in the records of her "General Assemblies." The General Assembly, in fact, from the year 1707 to the Disruption of the Scottish Church in 1843, was, to some extent, a veritable Parliament, in which, though the secular Parliament had been abolished, the united people of Scotland still saw their nationality preserved and represented. All through the year the clergy individually, in the thousand parishes or so into which Scotland was divided, managed their own parochial affairs with the assistance of select laymen called elders; these clergymen, again, with some of their elders, held frequent district meetings, called "presbyteries," in order to regulate by deliberation and voting the church affairs of their districts; there were still larger meetings, periodically held, called "provincial synods"; but the grand rendezvous of all, the supreme court of appeal and ecclesiastical legislation, was the annual General Assembly in Edinburgh. The time of its meeting was one of bustle and excitement. Black coats swarmed in the streets; the Assembly was opened with military pomp and circumstance by a Lord High Commissioner representing the Crown; this Commissioner sat on a throne during the meetings, and held levees and dinner-parties in Holyrood Palace all through the ten days; the clergy, with lay representatives, some of whom were usually noblemen or baronets, deliberated and debated during those ten days, under a president of their own choosing called the "Moderator"; the proceedings were in parliamentary form, and the decisions by a majority of votes; and in many cases,—as in trials of clergymen

for moral or ecclesiastical misdemeanour,—barristers were called in to plead professionally, as they did in the secular law-courts. As was natural in a deliberative assembly almost all the members of which were of the speaking class, the speaking was of a very high order, —far higher, indeed, than has ever been heard in these later days in the British Parliament; while at the same time there was ample opportunity for the exercise of business talent and of all the tact and skill of party-leadership. Much of the general politics of Scotland took necessarily the form of church politics; and, indeed, the connections between church politics and state politics were pretty close. The vast majority of the clergy were adherents of Dundas in general politics, and bent on swaying church polity in the same direction; while the small minority of "Evangelicals" or "High-Fliers," as they were called, corresponded to the proscribed "Liberals" in secular politics. The leading clergymen of both parties were to be found in or near Edinburgh.

Respecting the *Mercantile and Artisan classes* it need only be repeated that they were by no means separated by any social demarcation from the forementioned classes, but were intertwined with these by family-relationships, and often also by the sympathies belonging to superior natural intelligence and superior education. Booksellers and printers were more numerous in Edinburgh proportionally than in any other British town.

In a population of such dimensions, composed as has been described, there was necessarily a good deal of leisure; and leisure leads to sociability. Edinburgh in those days was one of the most sociable towns in the world. By that time "society," in the conven-

tional sense, had, with a few lingering exceptions, shifted itself out of the Old Town into the New, or into the suburbs; and, with this change, there had been a considerable change of manners. Much of the formality, and at the same time much of the coarseness, of an older stage of Scottish life had been civilised away, — the absurd etiquette of the old dancing assemblies, for example, and the more monstrous excesses of hard drinking. But the convivial spirit, and many of the old convivial forms, remained. Dinner parties were frequent; and the old custom of "toasts" and "sentiments" by the hosts and the guests over their wine was still in fashion. Lord Cockburn's description of those dinner parties of his youth is one of the best passages in his book. But it is on the supper parties that he dwells with most evident affection. There were various kinds of supper parties: the oyster supper at taverns, the bachelor supper in lodgings, and the real domestic supper, to which both sexes were invited; which last Lord Cockburn vaunts as a delightful institution of Edinburgh, which the advancing lateness of the dinner-hour had unhappily superseded. In short, in every form and way, from the set dinner party, with its immense consumption of claret, in the houses of the more wealthy, to the homely tea parties of gentlewomen of moderate means, living in the suburbs of the Old Town, or in *flats* in the New Town, and the roystering suppers of young men, where culinary deficiencies were compensated by good humour and the whisky punch, people were in the habit of incessantly meeting to spend the evenings together. Lord Cockburn mentions, as illustrative of the continuance of those sociable habits of the Edinburgh

folks to a somewhat later period than that with which we are immediately concerned, the fact that for a great many years after his marriage, which was in 1811, he had not spent above one evening in every month, on the average, in solitude, *i.e.* without either being out as a guest, or having friends with him at home. Even Sydney Smith, though not native and to the manner born, and, with his English tastes, more fastidious in his ideas of conviviality, retained to the last a pleasant recollection of those Edinburgh hospitalities, as experienced by him during his stay in Edinburgh from 1797 to 1802. "When shall I see Scotland again?" he says in one of his letters: "never shall I forget "the happy days passed there, amidst odious smells, "barbarous sounds, bad suppers, excellent hearts, and "the most enlightened and cultivated understandings."

Sydney Smith's allusion to "the enlightened and cultivated understandings" he encountered amid such roughish surroundings, suggests the mention of what was, all in all, the most characteristic feature of Edinburgh society at the close of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth—its *intellectualism.* In a community composed in so large a measure of practitioners of the learned professions, it was inevitable that there should be more of interest in matters intellectual than is common, more of a habit of reasoning and discussion, more play and variety in the choice of topics for conversation. What mattered it that many of the most intellectual men and women gave expression to their ideas in broad Scotch? Ideas may be expressed in broad Scotch, and yet be the ideas of cultivated minds; at all events, it was so then in Edinburgh, where many excellent lawyers, University professors, and medical men kept up the broad Scotch in

their ordinary conversation, though the majority had gone over to the English in all save accent, and some were sedulous in trying to Anglicise themselves even in that. But, whether the dialect was English or Scotch, there was a great deal of very pleasant and very substantial talk. True, in Sydney Smith's recollection of the conversation of the Edinburgh people at the time he moved among them, two great faults are specified. It ran too much, he records, to that species of jocosity, perfectly torturing to an Englishman, which the Scotch themselves called *wut*; and it also ran too much, he records, into disputation and dialectics. "Their only idea of wit," he says, speaking of the Scotch generally, but of the Edinburgh people in particular, "or rather of that inferior "variety of the electric talent which prevails occasion- "ally in the North, and which, under the name of "*wut*, is so infinitely distressing to people of good "taste, is laughing immoderately at stated intervals." And again—"They are so imbued with metaphysics "that they even make love metaphysically: I over- "heard a young lady of my acquaintance, at a dance "in Edinburgh, exclaim, in a sudden pause of the "music, 'What you say, my lord, is very true of love "in the *aibstract*, but——,' here the fiddlers began "fiddling furiously, and the rest was lost." This is somewhat unfair. *Wut*, in its place, is as good as *wit*, and may be a great deal heartier. As practised in the north, it corresponds more with what is properly *humour*. It consists in a general openness to the ludicrous view of things, a general disposition to call each other Tam and Sandy, a general readiness to tell and to hear Scottish stories the fun of which lies in the whole series of conceptions (often too local) that

they call up, rather than in any sudden flash or quip at the close. At all events, the Scotch like their *wut*, and find it satisfying. As for the dialectics, there *is*, perhaps, too much of that. The excess in this direction is due, doubtless, in part to the omnipresence of the lawyers. But *wut* and *dialectics* make a very good mixture; and, dashed as this mixture is and always has been in Edinburgh with finer and higher ingredients, there has been no town in Britain for the last century and a half of greater deipnosophistic capabilities, all things considered.

One element which Englishmen who do not know Edinburgh always imagine as necessarily wanting in it never has been wanting. Whether from the influence of the lawyers, and of the relics of the old Scottish baronage and baronetage, acting conjointly as a counterpoise to the influence of the clergy, or from other less obvious causes, there has always been in Edinburgh a freer undercurrent of speculative opinion, a tougher traditional scepticism, a greater latitude of jest at things clerical and Presbyterian, than in other Scottish towns. From the early part of the eighteenth century, when Allan Ramsay, Dr. Archibald Pitcairn, and others, did battle with the clergy in behalf of theatrical entertainments and other forms of the festive, there has never been wanting a strong anti-clerical and even free-thinking clique in Edinburgh society; and towards the end of the century, when David Hume and Hugo Arnot were alive or remembered, no city in Britain sheltered such a quantity of cosy infidelity. Of hundreds of stories illustrative of this, take one of the mildest:—Pitcairn, going about the streets one Sunday, was obliged by a sudden pelt of rain to take refuge in a place he was not often in,—a

church. The audience was scanty; and he sat down in a pew where there was only another sitter besides, —a quiet, grave-looking countryman, listening to the sermon with a face of the utmost composure. The preacher was very pathetic; so much so that at one passage he began to shed tears copiously, and to use his pocket-handkerchief. Interested in this as a physiological phenomenon for which the cause was not apparent, Pitcairn turned to the countryman, and asked in a whisper, "What the deevil gars the man greet?" "Faith," said the man, slowly turning round, "ye wad maybe greet yoursel' if ye was up there and had as little to say." Pitcairn was the type of the avowed Edinburgh infidel; of which class there were not a few whose esoteric talk when they met together was of an out-and-out kind; but the countryman was the type of a still more numerous class, who kept up exterior conformity, but tested all shrewdly enough by a pretty tough interior instinct. Indeed, long after Pitcairn's time, a kind of sturdy scepticism, quite distinct from what would be called "infidelity," was common among the educated classes in Edinburgh. Old gentlemen who went duly to church, who kept their families in great awe, and who preserved much etiquette in their habits towards each other, were by no means strait-laced in their beliefs; and it was not till a considerably later period, when a more fervid religious spirit had taken possession of the Scottish clergy themselves, and flamed forth in more zealous expositions of peculiar Calvinistic doctrine from the pulpit than had been customary in the days of Robertson and Blair, that evangelical orthodoxy obtained in Edinburgh its visible and intimate alliance with social respectability. Moreover, even those who

were then indubitably orthodox and devout by the older standard were devout after a freer fashion, and with a far greater liberty both of conduct and of rhetoric, than would now be allowable in consistency with the same reputation. There is no point on which Lord Cockburn lays more stress than on this. "There "is no contrast," he says, "between those old days and "the present that strikes me so strongly as that sug- "gested by the differences in religious observances, "not so much by the world in general, as by deeply "religious people. I knew the habits of the religious "very well, partly through the piety of my mother and "her friends, the strict religious education of her "children, and our connection with some of the most "distinguished of our devout clergymen. I could "mention many practices of our old pious which would "horrify modern zealots. The principles and feelings "of the persons commonly called evangelical were the "same then that they are now; the external acts by "which these principles and feelings were formerly "expressed were materially different."

Among the differences, Lord Cockburn notes in particular the much laxer style, as it would now be called, in which Sunday was observed by pious people and even by the most pious among the clergy. There seems also to have been more freedom of speech, in the direction of what would now be called profane allusion, among the admittedly pious. One of the gems of Lord Cockburn's book is his portrait of one venerable old lady, a clergyman's widow, sitting neatly dressed in her high-backed leather chair, with her grandchildren round her, the very model of silver-haired serenity, till one of her granddaughters, in reading the newspaper to her, stumbled on a paragraph

which told how the reputation of a certain fair one at the court of the Prince Regent had suffered from some indiscreet talk of his about his own relations with her, but then starting up, and exclaiming, with an indignant shake of her shrivelled fist,—"The dawmed villain! does he kiss and tell?" There were not a few old ladies of this stamp in Edinburgh in Lord Cockburn's boyhood and youth; some of whom survived far into the present century, too old to part with their peculiarities, even to please the clergy. "Ye speak, sir, as if the Bible had just come oot," said one such old lady, who lingered long in Edinburgh, to a young clergyman who was instructing her on some point of Christian practice on which she was disposed to differ from him. The continuation in the society of Edinburgh of a considerable sprinkling of such free-speaking gentlewomen of the old Scottish school, intermingled with as many of the other sex using a still rougher rhetoric, imparted, we are told, a flavour of originality to the convivial conversation of the place for which there is now no exact equivalent.

Presided over by such seniors, the young educated men of the time did not stint themselves in the choice or the range of *their* convivial topics. They discussed everything under the sun and down to the centre. Who has not heard of the Speculative Society of Edinburgh, founded in 1764 in connection with the University, and kept up from that time to this by successive generations of students; of which Lord Cockburn says that it "has trained more young men to public spirit, talent, and liberal thought, than all the other private institutions in Scotland"? Between 1780 and 1800 this society was in all its

glory, discussing, week after week, as its minutes inform us, such topics as these:—"Ought any permanent support to be provided for the poor?" "Ought there to be an established religion?" "Was the execution of Charles I. justifiable?" "Should the slave trade be abolished?" "Has the belief in a future state been of advantage to mankind, or is it ever likely to be so?" "Is it for the interest of Britain to maintain what is called the balance of Europe?" Here surely was scepticism enough to keep thought alive; and that such questions, discussed not only in the Speculative Society, but also in minor associations of the same kind, and carried doubtless also, with other more scientific topics, into private assemblages, should have been ventilated in Edinburgh at that day, shows that, even under the Dundas Despotism, there was no lack of *intellectual* freedom.

It is but a continuation of what we have been saying to add that the old Edinburgh of those defunct decades had already an established reputation as a literary metropolis. The rise of the literary reputation of Edinburgh may date, for all purposes except such as shallow present scholarship would call merely antiquarian, from the time when Allan Ramsay set up his circulating library in the High Street, and supplied the lieges furtively with novels, plays, and song-books, including his own poems. This was about the year 1725, when his countryman, Thomson, was publishing in London the first portion of his *Seasons*. Thomson himself, and his contemporaries or immediate successors, Mallet, Smollett, Armstrong, Meikle, Macpherson, and Falconer, all rank in the list of literary Scots; but they were *Scoti extra Scotiam agentes*, and had, most

of them, but an incidental connection with Edinburgh. The poets Robert Blair and James Beattie, the philosopher Reid, and the theologian and critic Dr. George Campbell, were not only literary Scots, but literary Scots whose lives were spent on their own side of the Tweed; but, with the exception of Blair, none of them were natives of Edinburgh, and even Blair did not live there. After Ramsay, in short, the early literary fame of Edinburgh is associated with the names of a cluster of men who, born in different parts of Scotland, had, from various chances, taken up their abode in Edinburgh, and who resided there, more or less permanently, during the latter half of the eighteenth century. The most prominent men of this cluster were these:—David Hume (1711-1776), known as a philosophical writer since the year 1738, and who, though he spent a good many years of his literary life in England and in France, was for the last twenty years of it, and these the most busy, a resident in Edinburgh; Hume's senior and survivor, Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), one of the judges of the Court of Session, still remembered for the contrast between the coarse Scottish facetiousness of his manners and the studied fineness of his writings; the learned and eccentric Burnet, Lord Monboddo (1714-1799), also a judge of Session, at whose Attic suppers in the Old Town all the talent and beauty of Edinburgh were for many years regularly assembled: the pompous but sensible Dr. Hugh Blair (1718-1799), Professor of Belles Lettres in the University, and one of the clergymen of the city; his more celebrated colleague, Dr. Robertson the historian (1722-1793), Principal of the University, and likewise one of the city clergymen; the minor historical writers and

antiquarians, Tytler of Woodhouselee (1711-1792), Dr. Henry (1718-1790), Lord Hailes (1726-1792), Dr. Adam Ferguson (1724-1816), and Dr. Gilbert Stuart (1742-1786); the poet John Home, author of the tragedy of *Douglas* (1722-1808), once the Rev. Mr. Home, but long bereft of that title, and known since 1779 as a retired man of letters in Edinburgh; the illustrious Adam Smith (1723-1790), settled in Edinburgh during the last twenty years of his life in the post of commissioner of customs; the hardly less illustrious Dugald Stewart (1753-1828), elected Professor of Mathematics in the University as early as 1774, but thence transferred in 1785 to the chair of Moral Philosophy, where he completed his fame; and, lastly, not to overburden the list, the novelist and essayist Henry Mackenzie (1745-1831), an acknowledged literary celebrity ever since 1771, when he had published his *Man of Feeling*. In a class by himself, unless we choose to associate him with the Creeches, Smellies, and other "wuts" of a lower grade, whose acquaintance Burns made in his leisure hours during his first visit to Edinburgh in 1786, we may mention Burns's immediate predecessor in the poetry of the Scottish vernacular, the unfortunate Robert Fergusson (1751-1774). He was a native of Edinburgh, and his brief life was squandered in its taverns.

It was by virtue of the residence in the Scottish capital through the latter half of the eighteenth century of this cluster of men,—a tolerably brilliant cluster, it will be admitted,—that the city first assumed that position of literary rivalry with London which the names of Scott, Jeffrey, and Wilson enabled it to maintain for thirty or forty years longer. And here we may

be permitted, parenthetically, a remark on a subject of some interest to Scotsmen generally. A not unfrequent question is whether Edinburgh will continue to maintain her former activity as a literary capital, or whether in literature, as in other things, the tendency is not to absolute centralisation in London. A little fact involved in the list of names just given is of some pertinence in relation to this inquiry. Let the list be examined, and it will be found that hardly one of the men mentioned in it as having begun the literary celebrity of Edinburgh was *professionally* a man of letters. They were all lawyers, or clergymen, or university professors, or retired gentlemen who had posts and pensions. Even poor Fergusson the poet owed his living to his industry as copying-clerk to a lawyer. In this respect the literary society of Edinburgh at that date contrasts with that of London. Johnson, Goldsmith, and most of their set were writers by profession; and it was chiefly by such professional writers that the literary reputation of London was then supported. Nay, whenever a Scotsman of that time was led by circumstances to adopt literature as an occupation, it will be observed that, almost of course, he migrated into England, and attached himself to the skirts of the literary world of London. There was there a literary *market*, whereas in Edinburgh there were merely so many resident citizens who were at the same time authors. Thomson, Mallet, Smollett, Macpherson, and many other Scots of less note connected with the British literature of the last century as writers by profession, betook themselves necessarily to London as their proper field. Hence a difference between the literary society of Edinburgh and that of London, not indi-

cated in the mere fact that the one city was the Scottish, and the other the English, capital. The literary society of Edinburgh did consist chiefly of authors of Scottish birth, but there might have been Englishmen in it without essentially changing its character; and, on the other hand, the literary society of London included Scotsmen and Irishmen as well as Englishmen. The difference, therefore, was not so much that the one society consisted of Scottish and the other of English elements. It was rather that the one consisted of men independently resident in the place as lawyers, clergymen, and what not, and employing their leisure in literature, while the other consisted, to far greater extent, of authors by profession. This difference is pointed out by one of the old Edinburgh set itself, as serving to account for what he considered the greater geniality and cordiality of the habits of that set in their intercourse with each other in comparison with the contemporary habits of London literary society under the dogmatic presidency of Johnson. "Free and cordial communication of sentiments, the natural play of good humour," says Henry Mackenzie, in his memoir of his friend John Home, "prevailed among the circle of men whom I have described. It was very different from that display of learning, that prize-fighting of wit, which distinguished a literary circle of our sister country of which we have some authentic and curious records." And the reason, he thinks, lay in the different constitutions of the two societies. "The "literary circle of London was a sort of sect, a *caste* "separate from the ordinary professions and habits of "common life. They were traders in talent and "learning, and brought, like other traders, samples of

"their goods into company, with a jealousy of com-
"petition which prevented their enjoying, as much as
"otherwise they might, any excellence in their com-
"petitors." There is some truth in this, though it is expressed somewhat carpingly; and even at the present day the remark may be taken as describing a certain difference which the Edinburgh "wuts" think they see between themselves and the London "wits." But may not the fact under notice have some bearing also on the centralisation question? If from the first, and at the very time when the literary reputation of Edinburgh was at its height, Edinburgh was not a centre of professional literary industry, then,—despite the subsequent establishment of important newspapers and some important periodicals in the city, and the generation in it by their means of some amount of professional literary industry,—it is hardly likely that it can long resist with visible success the tendency which threatens to centralise British literary industry of that sort mainly in London. If, indeed, in literature, as in other kinds of production, the manufacture might be carried on at a distance from the market, the tendency *might* be resisted; in other words, authors might live in Edinburgh and the publishing machinery might be in London. In literature, however, less than in most trades, is such an arrangement possible. But let not Edinburgh despair. Only let her still have within her, as hitherto, a sufficient number of the right kind of persons, distributed through her official appointments, or in other ways habitually resident, and it is pretty certain that books of all varieties will continue to be shot out from her at intervals, some of them the more valuable perhaps because they will not have been made to order.

To return to our more immediate subject:—It will enable us more distinctly to conceive the state of Edinburgh society ninety or ninety-five years ago if we enumerate the more important of the individuals, old and young, who then figured in it. In doing so, it will be well to fix on some one year, at which to take our census. For various reasons the year 1802 may be selected. It was the first year of the short peace, or "armed truce," which intervened between the two wars with France; it was the first year, also, of that short and perplexing interregnum in home affairs during which Addington was prime minister and Pitt and Dundas were out of office.

Few of the intellectual chiefs of the former generation were now alive in Edinburgh. David Hume and the poet Fergusson had been dead more than a quarter of a century; Kames and Gilbert Stuart for nearly twenty years. Dr. Henry, Adam Smith, the physician Cullen, Blacklock, Lord Hailes, the elder Tytler of Woodhouselee, and Robertson the historian, had disappeared more recently, and were still remembered. Fresher still was the local recollection of Lord Monboddo, Dr. Hugh Blair, the chemist Black, whose death had occurred in 1799, and of such minor celebrities as the Rev. Dr. Macknight and Dr. Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk. Of nearly all these men Lord Cockburn could remember something, either as having known them domestically in his boyhood, or as having watched them taking their daily walk in the "Meadows"; and it was one of the gratifications of his after-life to think that, while privileged to live into the splendours of a new age, he had been born early enough to see the departing skirts of the old. Some remnants of the old age,

however, did survive as connecting links between it and the new. Home, the author of "Douglas," was alive in 1802, an infirm veteran of eighty, with flashes of his former spirit in him, and still capable of his claret. Another survivor was Dr. Adam Ferguson, two years the junior of Home and much of an invalid, but with fourteen years of life still before him. Henry Mackenzie, called "The Man of Feeling," but as shrewd a man of the world as there was in Edinburgh, was another of the veterans,—fifty-seven years old, but destined to reach the age of eighty-six. Dugald Stewart was verging on his fiftieth year, and his philosophical reputation was still on the increase. To these survivors in the world of philosophy and letters add, as notables in the department of science, Robison, the Professor of Natural Philosophy, and Playfair, the Professor of Mathematics, and, as the ablest remaining specimens of the old Edinburgh clergy, Dr. John Erskine and Sir Henry Moncreiff. Passing into the miscellaneous society amid which those men moved, and which they linked intellectually with the past, we may distribute their Edinburgh contemporaries of the year 1802 into three categories: —(1) *The Old Worthies.*—This category includes a considerable number of surviving citizens, belonging, by their age, habits, and costume, to the same past generation as the notabilities above named, and many of them, indeed, older than the younger notabilities of that list. Most conspicuous among them were the old dons of the Parliament House; of some of whom Lord Cockburn gives wonderful portraits. The awful Braxfield was dead; but his successor on the bench, David Rae, Lord Eskgrove,—more familiarly known as "Esky,"—was keeping the Parliament House

in a constant roar with the daily rumour of his last absurdities. What a blessing for a moderately-sized community to have at its heart such a preventive against insipidity, such a clove or cassia-bud of all-diffusive relish, as this famous Lord Justice-Clerk Esky; whom Lord Cockburn once heard sentence a tailor to death for the murder of a soldier in these terms,—"Not only did you murder him, whereby he was berea-ved of his life, but you did thrust, or push, or pierce, or project, or propell the le-thall weapon through the belly-band of his regimen-tal breeches, which were his Majes-ty's," and of whom Lord Cockburn further vouches that his customary formula of address to a criminal in concluding the sentence of death was,—"Whatever your religi-ous persua-shon may be, or even if, as I suppose, you be of no persua-shon at all, there are plenty of rever-end gentlemen who will be most happy to show you the way to yeternal life." Of the rest of the fifteen judges, the most remarkable for their talents and their character were the Lord President Ilay Campbell, Lord Glenlee, Lord Hermand, Lord Meadowbank the first, and Lord Cullen. After Esky, Hermand was the most notorious oddity of the bench. At the bar, the witty Harry Erskine, and Charles Hay, afterwards Lord Newton, might be ranked among the older men. Coevals of these dons of the Parliament House, were Andrew Dalzel, the Professor of Greek in the University, and Dr. Finlayson, the Professor of Logic; with whom may be mentioned the simple-hearted Dr. Adam, Rector of the High School, the Rev. Dr. Struthers, a distinguished preacher of the Secession Church, and the veteran bookseller Creech. (2) *The Middle-Aged*

Men.—Taking this class to include all who, while old enough to have obtained some standing in life, were still not past their maturity, we may enumerate in it such leading lawyers as Robert Dundas of Arniston (nephew of the great Dundas, and promoted to the office of Chief Baron of the Exchequer in 1801, after having been Lord Advocate for twelve years), and Robert Blair, Charles Hope, Adam Gillies, John Clerk of Eldin, David Cathcart, and David Boyle, all of whom subsequently rose to the Bench; Malcolm Laing, then also an advocate, but subsequently better known as an antiquarian and historian; James Gibson, Writer to the Signet, afterwards Sir James Gibson Craig; the Presbyterian clergyman, Dr. John Inglis, and the Rev. Archibald Alison of the Scottish Episcopal Church; in the medical profession, Dr. Andrew Duncan, Dr. James Gregory, and Dr. John Bell; and, among miscellaneous residents, Nasmyth, the portrait painter, and George Thomson, the correspondent of Burns. (3) *Young Edinburgh.*—Here also the Bar had the preponderance. Reckoning among the juniors at the bar all who had been called after 1790, one has to include these in the list,—John Macfarlan, Archibald Fletcher, Walter Scott, William Erskine, Thomas Thomson, George Cranstoun, George Joseph Bell, James Grahame, James Moncreiff, Francis Jeffrey, Francis Horner, J. A. Murray, John Richardson, Henry Cockburn, and Henry Brougham. Of this group of young advocates, all afterwards locally eminent, some had already revealed the faculties which were to make them known far beyond the precincts of the Parliament House. Brougham was about the youngest of them, being then only in his twenty-third year; but he was the recognised dare-devil of the whole group,

the most vehement of the orators of the Speculative, and the terror of old Esky. "That man Broom or Broug-ham," Esky used to say, "is the torment of my life." Older than Brougham by a year, Horner was already a leader among his associates by the solid strength and integrity of his character. Jeffrey was in his twenty-ninth year, a married young barrister, waiting for briefs. Scott, then also married and past his thirtieth year, was more comfortably settled: he was Sheriff of Selkirkshire, had some practice at the bar, and had already some literary reputation by metrical translations from the German, a few Scottish ballads, and his edition of *The Border Minstrelsy*. But the bar did not include all the young talents. Among the hopes of the medical profession were John Allen, John Thomson, and Thomas Brown, the future metaphysician. Leyden, the poet and linguist, was then one of the rising stars of Edinburgh; and Thomas Campbell, whose *Pleasures of Hope* had been for three years before the public, was for the time a resident. Nor was a sprinkling of English residents wanting, to exchange ideas with so many fervid young Scots, and banter them about their dialect and their prejudices. Had not the philosophic Lord Webb Seymour chosen Edinburgh for his home; and was not Sydney Smith there on his memorable visit? Finally, if any one in Edinburgh wanted to have his portrait splendidly painted, to whom could he go but to Henry Raeburn? Or, if any one wanted information about books which old Creech, or Miller, or Bell and Bradfute could not give, from whom was he so likely to obtain it as from the energetic and ambitious young bookseller, Archibald Constable?

Looking down in fancy on the sea of 80,000 heads

which in the year 1802 constituted the population of Edinburgh,—some gray with age, many wigged and powdered, and many more wearing the brown or light locks of natural youth,—it is on the above-named sixty or seventy that the instructed eye now rests as the most conspicuous in the crowd. But the instructed eye sees something more than the mere mass of heads, with here and there one of the conspicuous sixty. It sees the mass swaying to and fro,—here solid and restful, there discomposed and in motion, and the conspicuous heads unequally distributed amid the wavering parts. In other words, the society of Edinburgh in 1802, like every other society before or since, presented the phenomenon of division into two parties, —the party of rest and conservation, and the party of change or progress. The main fact in the history of Edinburgh at that time was that an incessant house-to-house battle was going on in it between old Scottish Toryism and a new and vigorous Scottish Whiggism. Numerically, the Tories were immensely in the majority, and the Whigs were but in small proportion. But it is not by the numerical measure in such cases that History judges or portions out her interest. The party that is largest may be the lump, and that which is smallest may be the leaven. So it was most remarkably in the Edinburgh of 1802. To any one surveying the society of Edinburgh then, with something of that knowledge which we now possess, two facts would have seemed significant: first, that, though the majority were on the Tory side, most of the conspicuous heads were on the Whig side; secondly, and still more obviously, that among the conspicuous heads the Whigs claimed nearly all the young ones. If, for example, Toryism could claim a full half of the veterans

that have been named, the potent old chiefs of the Parliament House included, yet even of those veterans a few, such as Erskine, Dugald Stewart, Playfair, old Dr. Adam, and Sir Henry Moncreiff, were Whigs; if among the middle-aged Toryism was equally strong, yet here also Whiggism could count representatives in Gillies, Clerk of Eldin, Malcolm Laing, and the resolute James Gibson; and, if still, after surveying those two classes, there had been any doubt which of the two political parties had the higher pretensions intellectually, it was only necessary to descend among the young and adolescent to see that among *them* at least Whiggism had most recruits. Of the younger men of Edinburgh then entering life who afterwards rose to be something in the world's eye, Scott alone, remarks Lord Cockburn, was unmistakably a Tory. The exception is certainly a weighty one; and there are some,—myself among them,—who would willingly take one Walter Scott at any time as a sufficient offset against a Jeffrey, a Horner, a Sydney Smith, a Brougham, an Allen, a Thomas Brown, and a Tom Campbell, all put together. If the standard of judgment, however, is to be that of the right and the wrong in politics, this will hardly be now the general opinion.

We do not now associate Whiggism with any idea of the heroic. But in the year 1802 one had to judge otherwise. Whiggism all over Britain, but especially Scottish Whiggism, then required some courage, some spirit of self-sacrifice, in its adherents. The actual creed of the Scottish Whigs was moderate enough. It consisted in believing that there were a great many remediable abuses in the Scottish political and administrative system, that the people had too little power and the lairds too much, that the Revolution in France

had not been unmitigated madness, that at any rate the dread of its effects on this country had been monstrously exaggerated, and that, on the whole, the policy of Fox and his associates was a policy to be supported in preference to that of his rival, Pitt. The creed, we say, was moderate; and it was, undoubtedly, in large measure, true. What made it heroism to hold to it was that the holding of it involved serious personal consequences,—exclusion from all share in the good things going, and even, to a considerable extent, from popular confidence and favour; with no prospect either (for who could tell when George III. might die, or how his son might act when he came to the throne?) that this state of things would soon end. That in such circumstances so many men in Scotland, and especially so many men of the legal profession, should have maintained the obnoxious creed, and maintained it with such tenacity and mutual fidelity in spite of all temptation, is a fact of which Scotland may well be proud. As a body, the Scottish Whigs of 1802 seem to have been as courageous and pure-minded a set of men as there were in Great Britain. Theirs, in the most literal sense, was "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Most creditable of all, perhaps, was the persevering Whiggism of so many of the younger men. Beating their heels idly in a particular corner of the Parliament House, where no agents came to them with briefs, and whiling away the rest of their time with essays and debates in the Speculative Society, ambitious dreams in secret, convivial meetings at each others' houses, and eternal jokes about Esky, those light-hearted young Whig lawyers had not even that sense of social consequence to support them which their seniors on the same side

of politics could feel as an inspiration. They formed a little band by themselves, cherishing their Whiggism for its own sake, and not even visited by much countenance from their Whig seniors. And yet upon them, to a greater extent than they or their seniors were aware, depended the future history of Scotland.

The moving force in Scottish society at that time was consciously possessed by the Whigs. Though by far the smaller party numerically over Scotland as a whole, they could not but feel that they must eventually win. The great want of the party hitherto had been some voice or organ, some public means of proclaiming collectively the views which they entertained individually, of propagating these views in new quarters, and of exhibiting them again and again in contrast with those of their opponents. No such means of utterance existed. The senior Edinburgh Whigs had been in the habit of dining together on Fox's birthday, on which occasions constables were stationed at the doors by the authorities to take down the names of the guests as they entered; they also occasionally fought their opponents on a temporary local question. This, however, was all; and Scottish Whiggism, though working as a social ferment, had no organisation and no flag. The year 1802,—the country then, as we have seen, in the lull of the brief peace with France, and Pitt and Dundas out of office,—was a time when it began to seem possible to supply this want. "Events," says Lord Cockburn, "were "bringing people into somewhat better humour. "Somewhat less was said about Jacobinism, though "still too much; and sedition had gone out. Napo-"leon's obvious progress towards military despotism "opened the eyes of those who used to see nothing

"but liberty in the French Revolution. Instead of "Jacobinism, Invasion became the word." In short, though the old habits and all the old abuses still remained, the state of the public mind was such that it became more easy to establish a means for publicly attacking them and advocating reform.

Whence was the expected demonstration to come, and what form was it to take? Where in Scotland was the standard of Scottish Whiggism to be first raised, and who was to step forth as the standard-bearer?

Scotland had recently lost one man who, had he lived till 1802, might have been called on to act this part. Six or eight years before, when it was most dangerous to be a Scottish Whig,—when to be too zealous a Scottish Whig, unless one were powerfully connected, meant to run a risk of trial for sedition,—there had not been a more daring Whig in Scotland than the poet Burns. True, he was a Whig, as he was everything else, after an uncovenanted fashion of his own, which did not keep touch with any of the current definitions of Whiggism; but, for all that, he was, and he called himself, a Scottish Whig. "Go on, "sir," he wrote from Dumfries, in the end of 1792, to the Whig, or rather Whig-Radical, editor of the short-lived *Edinburgh Gazetteer*, to which he had become a subscriber: "Go on, and lay bare, with undaunted "heart and steady hand, that horrid mass of corrup-"tion called politics and statecraft. Dare to draw in "their native colours those 'calm-thinking villains "whom no faith can fire,' whatever be the shibboleth "of their pretended party." This was Whiggism and a vast deal more; but the following song, written at the same time, or not long after, shows that, all in all, as

matters then stood, it pleased Burns to be known as a Whig of the Fox school :—

"Here's a health to them that's awa,
Here's a health to them that's awa;
And wha winna wish guid luck to our cause,
May never guid luck be their fa'!
It's guid to be merry and wise,
It's guid to be honest and true,
It's guid to support Caledonia's cause
And bide by the buff and the blue.

Here's a health to them that's awa,
Here's a health to them that's awa;
Here's a health to Charlie, the chief o' the clan,
Although that his band be sma'!
May liberty meet wi' success!
May prudence protect her frae evil!
May tyrants and tyranny tine in the mist,
And wander their way to the Devil!"

Had Burns lived till 1802, who knows to what his politics might have led him? He would then have been still only in his forty-fourth year; and what fate more imaginable for him, had he been still alive, than that, deprived of his gaugership, or throwing it up, he should have left Dumfries for Edinburgh, and, associating himself there with the many who would have welcomed him, and with whom, whatever their rank, there was no fear that his relations would have ever been other than those of perfect equality, he should have become the editor, mayhap, of a Whig newspaper? If so, who can doubt that prose would have become easier to him, that he would have been a power among the Scottish Whigs, and that his influence would have been felt, in his new character, by them and by the nation? Ah! and, had he lived on through all their coming struggles, would he not have been but seventy-three years of age at the time of the passing of the Reform Bill; and,

in gratitude to him as a veteran Whig and ex-editor, might not his fellow-citizens at last have returned him to the House of Commons as the senior colleague of young Macaulay?—"Profanation! profanation!" is the cry that will rise to all Scottish lips on the mere muttering of such a fancy. Nature herself had been of that opinion. Burns had died in 1796, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, a broken-down exciseman, in Dumfries; and he was to be remembered to all eternity,—thank God!—simply as Robert Burns.

The required party-standard was raised by the young Whigs of Edinburgh. It was in Jeffrey's humble domicile, in an upper storey in one of the houses of Buccleuch Place, that, on one memorable day in the year 1802, Sydney Smith first started the idea of a new periodical, combining literature with politics, to be published quarterly, and kept up by contributions from the teeming minds of the members of the Speculative Society. No sooner said than done: Constable at once undertook the publication; and on the 10th of October 1802 the first number of the *Edinburgh Review* saw the light. For a number or two the editorship was the joint-occupation of Sydney Smith, Jeffrey, Horner, Brougham, and a few others,—Sydney Smith officiating in chief; but, on Smith's return to London soon afterwards, the management fell exclusively on Jeffrey.

The establishment of the *Edinburgh Review*, as all the world knows, was the beginning of a new era in the history of British politics. For a while, indeed, it was rather as a power in the general thought and literature of the country than as a direct force in politics that the new organ made itself felt. For its success in the latter function circumstances for the first two or three

years were not very propitious. The war with France having been renewed in 1803, and the Addington ministry having resigned in May 1804, and Pitt having then resumed the Premiership with Dundas (now Lord Melville) as again his principal colleague and at the head of the Admiralty, not only were the Scottish Tories once more in a mood of placid satisfaction over this change, and over the prospect which it brought of a reassured term of the Dundas proconsulship in Scotland; but the very occasion of the recall of Pitt to power, the very nature of the business in which Pitt and Dundas had to exert themselves, tended for the time to a modification, or at least a postponement, of party differences. Napoleon was now Emperor of the French; what he threatened now was an actual invasion of Britain; how could party differences continue operative in any virulent degree in face of such a common danger?

Party differences did subside for the while. All over the island Whigs and Tories alike were in a ferment of volunteering and drilling for resistance to the French when they should land; and was it not a Whig admiral that, having won for all Britain the glory, willingly bequeathed to a Tory Government the usufruct, of the great battle of Trafalgar? People were at no leisure to listen with sufficient attention at such a time to expositions of the superiority of Whig principles, even from such an organ as the *Edinburgh Review.*

In 1806, however, the face of things was suddenly altered. The death of Pitt in the January of that year, when his second administration was already tottering under the blow inflicted upon it by the impeachment of Lord Melville, brought it to an abrupt close; and

the Whigs, no less to their own surprise than to that of the country, found themselves again in power, after an interval since their last real experience of that ecstasy which could be spanned by the memory only of old people then living. The accession to office of the Whig ministry of Fox and Grenville was startling enough, even had there been no especially Whiggish acts to correspond. But, during the thirteen months of the Fox and Grenville ministry (January 1806—March 1807), there *were* acts to correspond, over and above the prosecution of the Melville Impeachment to its conclusion. As places fell vacant, Whigs were appointed to them; an attempt was made to open negotiations for peace with Napoleon; and various measures of domestic reform were introduced into Parliament. To the Scottish Tories it was as if chaos had come again. Could they have foreseen that the crisis was to be so short,—could they have foreseen that the new Whig ministry, after having been weakened by the death of Fox in September 1806, would be able to struggle on but for six months more, and that then the Whigs would be driven back into their accustomed place as a minority in opposition, with another quarter of a century of uninterrupted Tory administration for Britain, and of a modified Dundas rule in Scotland, to intervene before they should again rise to supremacy,—it is possible that the consternation would have been less. But this at the time could not have been foreseen. The accession of the Whigs to power, and their retention of it during a whole year, were a rude awakening to men who had been asleep; and from that moment Toryism had bad dreams.

The crisis was powerfully felt in Edinburgh; and all that remains for us in this paper is to move forward

from 1802 to 1806, for a glance at the state of Edinburgh in this latter year, when the effects of the crisis there were most acute.

As was natural, the mere lapse of time, independently of the special events that had been happening, had produced some changes. Of the seniors, both of the Whig and of the Tory party, that have been noted as alive in 1802, some had been removed by death; and, by these and other deaths, those who in 1802 had occupied junior positions in their respective parties found themselves promoted to higher places, and to more active concern in party affairs. Among the Tories of the Parliament House the most active heads, besides Robert Dundas of Arniston as Chief Baron of Exchequer, were Hope, now Lord Justice-Clerk in the place of old Esky, and Blair, afterwards Lord President; but among the younger men who acted with these there was no one whose name stood higher, or whose Toryism was more enthusiastic, than Scott. During the four years that had elapsed since 1802 his literary reputation had been gradually rising; and the publication in 1805 of his *Lay of the Last Minstrel* had given him rank among the most popular poets of his age, and diffused among his countrymen for the first time some adequate conception of the nature and the measure of his genius. His literary celebrity had not been without its effect on his worldly circumstances; for, besides retaining his Sheriffship, he was now settled for life in the Clerkship of the Court of Session. Very similar to the position which Scott thus held among the Edinburgh Tories in 1806 was the position which Jeffrey then held among the Edinburgh Whigs. The active heads of the Whig party in the Parliament House were such seniors as

Harry Erskine, John Clerk of Eldin, and Adam Gillies. On the accession of the Fox and Grenville Ministry to office, Erskine had become Lord Advocate, Clerk had been made Solicitor-General, and Hay, another of the older set of Whig lawyers, had been raised to the bench. But, under those men, Jeffrey was now a person of far more consequence than he had been in 1802. Then he was only a rising junior in that set of independent young Whigs whom their elders were disposed rather to slight than to encourage; but his rapidly increasing distinction at the Bar, not to speak of the distinction accruing to him from the fame of the *Edinburgh Review*, had broken down the reserve of his seniors and compelled them to yield him due respect. Had Horner and Brougham remained in Edinburgh, they and Jeffrey might have been a kind of triumvirate, dividing among them the increased consideration which was now accorded to the younger portion of the Whig bar. But Horner and Brougham, as well as Allen and others of the little band of 1802, had by this time migrated to London, whence they kept up their connection with Edinburgh chiefly by correspondence and by contributions to the *Review*; and, as Cockburn and Murray had not yet attained a standing at the bar equal to Jeffrey's, there was no doubt as to *his* individual supremacy among the younger resident Edinburgh Whigs.

Scott and Jeffrey: these names represent, therefore, the heartiest Toryism of Scotland and its most hopeful and opinionative Whiggism, as they stood opposed to each other in Edinburgh society in the year 1806. Remembering this, and with the well-known portraits of the two men in our minds, we can read the

following passage in Lockhart's *Life of Scott* with a new sense of its significance :—

"Scott's Tory feelings appear to have been kept in a very excited state during the whole of the short reign of the Whigs. He then, for the first time, mingled keenly in the details of county politics — canvassed electors — harangued meetings; and, in a word, made himself conspicuous as a leading instrument of his party. But he was, in truth, earnest and serious in his belief that the new rulers of the country were disposed to abolish many of its most valuable institutions; and he regarded with special jealousy certain schemes of innovation with respect to the courts of law and the administration of justice which were set on foot by the crown-officers for Scotland. At a debate of the Faculty of Advocates on some of these propositions he made a speech much longer than he had ever before delivered in that assembly; and several who heard it have assured me that it had a flow and energy of eloquence for which those who knew him best were quite unprepared. When the meeting broke up, he walked across the Mound, on his way to Castle Street, between Mr. Jeffrey and another of his reforming friends, who complimented him on the rhetorical powers he had been displaying, and would willingly have treated the subject-matter of the discussion playfully. But his feelings had been moved to an extent far beyond their apprehension. He exclaimed 'No, no—'tis no laughing matter; little by little, whatever your wishes may be, you will destroy and undermine, until nothing of what makes Scotland Scotland shall remain.' And, so saying, he turned round to conceal his agitation—but not until Mr. Jeffrey saw tears gushing down his cheek,—resting his head, until he recovered himself, on the wall of the Mound."

Edinburgh in 1806 is painted for us in that incident. Of the two men seen standing together on the Mound, under the tall clump of old houses which still on that spot arrests the eye of the visitor, the stalwart fair-haired one, leaning his head on the wall to conceal his tears, is the genius of the Scottish past, while his less moved companion, of smaller stature, with dark keen features and piercing hazel eyes, is the confident spirit of the Scottish future. There was, indeed, one element, then in making for the Scottish future, no representation of which was discernible in Jeffrey, and which was not

logically involved in any ostensible form of Scottish Political Whiggism. This was that fervour of a revived Evangelicism in Theology the effects of which on the national character and the national polity of Scotland have been so strikingly visible through the last two generations and more. But this was a manifestation of later date, which even the closest observer of 1806 could hardly have pre-imagined. The traditional germ existed in Sir Henry Moncreiff; but the full development was to come with the combative Calvinistic and Presbyterian energy of Andrew Thomson, and the grander and richer genius of Thomas Chalmers.

THE LAST YEARS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT[1]

After the death of Sir Walter Scott in 1832, a private journal of his, extending over the greater part of the last seven years of his life, and consisting of two thick vellum-bound volumes of close writing, carefully clasped and locked, came into the hands of his son-in-law Lockhart, to be used at his discretion for the biography of his great relative. Accordingly, when that biography was published in 1837, the last portion of it contained a large selection of extracts from this Diary. Naturally, however, the matter in many places being of a kind which it would have been premature then to make public, it was only a selection that *could* be given by Lockhart. For more than half a century, therefore, the original manuscript volumes have remained at Abbotsford, waiting for the time when it should be judged fit to make that more complete publication of their contents which Scott himself had contemplated as inevitable at some time or other. The time has now arrived; and one of the most interesting literary events of the present season is the publication, by Mr. David Douglas of Edinburgh, of the great Sir Walter's Journal in perfect form and with all requisite annotations.

[1] Opening Address to Session 1890-1 of The Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh.

The Journal is a record, in the first place, of indomitable manliness, and of prodigious industry. When it was begun, in November 1825, Scott was at the very height of his enormous prosperity and popularity. He had not advanced far in it, however,—had not, in fact, got through the first month of his entries in it,—when there came upon him the ominous signs of that commercial crash in which he and his fortunes were to be overwhelmed. In several entries, day after day, there are anticipations of this disaster, mixed with still struggling hopes that it might be averted; but by the middle of January 1826 all hope had ceased, and he was a ruined man. "Skene, this is the hand of a beggar," was his salutation in his room in Castle Street, at seven o'clock in the morning of one of those cold January days, as he held out his hand to the confidential friend whom he had asked to call upon him at that early hour that they might consult over the news. All that he had possessed was swept away; and he was liable for debts, as it turned out, to the amount of about £130,000.

It is at this point that one may turn back, if one chooses, to the retrospect of that in Scott's previous life for which, amid boundless admiration of him otherwise, strict opinion will probably always pronounce him blameworthy. What but his worldly ambition, it is asked, what but his passion for money-making on such a large scale as might enable him to practise lavish social hospitalities, and to found and support a hereditary Scottish lairdship of high rank and name,—what but this had led him to be dissatisfied with his merely literary earnings, and to link the pursuits and pleasures of authorship with the activities and anxieties of a clandestine partnership in hazardous forms of

commerce? From one jotting in his Diary it would appear as if, in this matter, even the ruin in which he found himself at last had not taught him real repentance. Quoting a saying of a defunct old Scottish worthy which had been reported to him in these words, —"No chance of opulence is worth the risk of a competence,"—he appends this comment: "It was not the thought of a *great* man, but perhaps that of a *wise* one." Evidently, the ruling passion in Scott had not yet been killed; and, had the hazards of his previous life been still to run, he would have dared them all over again.

More satisfactory it is to leave that retrospective question, and to read the story which the journal tells of his unparalleled exertions to right himself with the world, and with his own sense of honour, to the last farthing of his huge responsibilities. For a while, indeed,—the new shock of his wife's death having come upon him in the very midst of the first troubles of his ruined condition, and his ability to sustain the load of his distresses being at the same time impaired by serious ill-health and frequent and intense bodily pains,—it is as if the downfall had been complete. Gloom seems to have settled on his spirits; and, though he bears a brave face to the world, we see him, in hours when he was alone, depressed secretly by crowding recollections of his happy past in comparison with the woeful present, and sunk sometimes in mere sobbings and tears. Gradually, however, he rouses himself; and what is it that we see then? Either still at Abbotsford, when his official duties in the Court of Session will allow him to leave town (for, by a family-prearrangement, he had still a life-rent tenure of Abbotsford, and could sequester himself there, when

he chose, on a greatly reduced establishment), or else in one or other of those Edinburgh residences to which he removed after his house in Castle Street had been sold,—first, lodgings in North St. David Street, then a furnished house in Walker Street, and finally a house in Shandwick Place,—we see the widowed veteran struggling on in the vast enterprise to which he had set himself of the discharge ultimately of all his debts, dashing cares aside as well as he could, and, though liable still to solitary hours of melancholy and to interrupting worries with lawyers and creditors, yet always pen in hand, and working, working, working. Extend the view over the six years from 1826 to 1831, and what a prolonged labour of Hercules! The voluminous *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*; the novel of *Woodstock*; the double series of "The Chronicles of the Canongate," including *The Two Drovers*, *The Highland Widow*, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, and *The Fair Maid of Perth*; the separate extra novels of *Anne of Geierstein*, *Count Robert of Paris*, and *Castle Dangerous*; the quadruple series of *The Tales of a Grandfather*, with a collateral *History of Scotland*; the *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*; the completion and publication of the verse-dramas called *The Doom of Devorgoil* and *The Ayrshire Tragedy*; a collective edition of the Miscellaneous Prose Works; the commencement of the author's *magnum opus*, as it was termed, in the shape of the revised and annotated reissue of the whole of the Waverley Novels: these, together with a number of more casual performances, such as the Malachi Malagrowther Letters and contributions to Reviews, formed the astonishing total of Scott's literary achievements during those six years, in addition to the previous total at which the world

had already wondered. What it is most pleasing now to observe in the progress through this dense forest of labour, as it is recorded month after month in the Diary, is the evidence there furnished of Scott's elasticity of spirits, and of his ready resumption of his old habits of generous sociability, in exact proportion to the success of his exertions. It is as if the immense mass of his debts had stood before him as a huge black rock, and as if, on beholding portion after portion of this rock blasted away by the successive charges of dynamite, large or small, which he was able to insert into its clefts in the shape of successive deposits of new money-earnings,—now, as in the case of his *Life of Napoleon*, a £10,000 or so at once, and again a more moderate sum of £1000 or £2000 only,—he watched each explosion, and each fall of detached slab or block, with a gleeful "Hurrah! the whole big brute will be down at last!" And, as he thus became himself again, Abbotsford became *itself* again,—its old hospitalities renewed in as frank and gallant a fashion as was consistent with proper economy in the circumstances, and relays of visitors arriving, and sometimes occupying his working-time too inconsiderately, while at other times it was his happiness to scribble on uninterruptedly, through whole mornings or whole rainy days, with no other recreation than a trudge through his plantations, accompanied by his dogs, and leaning on the arm of his faithful Tom Purdie. In Edinburgh the revival of his old habits in the prospect of his retrieved fortunes was much the same. Though he had not now such accommodation for his own hospitalities there as had been afforded by his former house in Castle Street, Edinburgh society could delight in the full possession of him once more after his temporary

seclusion and eclipse. At select dinner-parties, or in other evening gatherings, he was present again hardly less often than had been his previous custom,—the life of every such company still by his overflowing good humour and endless stock of anecdotes and good stories; and, through the day, as he limped along Princes Street, on his way to or from the Parliament House, all heads were turned to look at him,—a greater and more popular Sir Walter than ever, now that it was no longer a mere accepted conjecture that he was the author of the Waverley Novels, but the mask had been thrown aside and the secret had been publicly divulged. He records, by the way, in his Diary, that it was a real addition to his comfort when they presented him with a key of the Princes Street Gardens, then a private property of the Princes Street householders, so that he might walk to or from the Parliament House on soft velvet turf, amid quiet green shrubbery, and thus lessen the trouble caused by his stiffened joints and the increasing pain of his lameness. Nor was it within the circuit of Edinburgh only, or at Abbotsford only, that there was restored sunshine round his path. We hear of occasional excursions to the country seats of Scottish friends of his north of Edinburgh; and twice we follow him on leisurely posting journeys into England, for the purpose of a week or two in London again, and a round of calls and engagements in the busy whirl of London society. Once he crosses the Channel, revisits Paris, and spends some time amid the gaieties of that capital. Hardly from the entries in his Diary relating to those journeys,—so modest always are his mentions of himself,—should we learn what a pressure of admiring curiosity, rising

sometimes into tumults of enthusiasm and applause, gathered about him wherever he went. Whosoever else might be present,—ambassador, statesman, peer, scion of royalty, or even (as happened several times) the great Duke of Wellington himself,—it was always to Sir Walter Scott in chief, the contemporary memoirs tell us, that the eyes of the assembly were turned. New veneration for him, by reason of the diffused knowledge of the heroic contest which he had begun and was still maintaining with adverse fortune, mingled now, it seems, with all the former feelings which his name and recollections of his writings called up; and for thousands on thousands, whether at home or abroad, he was the most interesting man in all Europe.

What need to continue this sketch farther? The rest is known, in a general way, to every one. He had reached his sixtieth year,—not absolutely victorious as yet over the whole of the mass of debt against which he had been exerting himself, but with absolute victory within sight if he should live but a few years longer,—when it became evident that no such extension of his life was to be looked for. Signs of premature old age had become manifest in the complete whitening of his hair and the worn aspect of his visage; there had been distinct premonitions of failing powers in the inferior literary quality of some of his later productions; and three paralytic or apoplectic seizures in rapid succession, the last in April 1831, finished the process of wreck. A journey to the Mediterranean was recommended; and thither he went,—conveyed first to London by land, and then, by sea-voyage in a Government frigate, to Malta. From Malta, which he reached late in November 1831, he removed, about the middle of December,

to Naples; whence the proposal was that he should pass northwards through the rest of Italy, visiting Rome and other famous Italian cities. All in vain! He grew worse and worse; brain and speech lost their normal functions; his restlessness and impatience became ungovernable. The Mediterranean, Italy, Rome, blue skies and classical cities,—what are they all to *me*?

> Give me back one hour of Scotland;
> Let me see it ere I die.

They conveyed him back by slow stages, seeing this and that continental sight on his homeward-route, but hardly knowing what he saw. He was in London again for a week or two in June and July 1832, attended medically in a hotel in Jermyn Street. Brought thence by sea to Edinburgh, he passed a night, a day, and another night, in a hotel in St. Andrew Square, in a state of utter unconsciousness; and on the 11th of July they took him to Abbotsford. On their way thither through the old familiar scenery he began to recognise places and objects, and to mutter their names,—Gala Water, Buckholm, Torwoodlee; and, when they approached Abbotsford itself, and he caught sight of its towers, he sprang up in such a state of excitement that they could hardly hold him in the carriage. "Ha! Willie Laidlaw! O man, I have often thought of *you*," were his first words, after his old friend and amanuensis Laidlaw, who was waiting in the porch, had assisted the rest in carrying him into the house, and seating him in a chair in the dining-room. The return of consciousness which this recognition signified became more and more marked, at least at intervals, in the

two months and ten days through which he still lingered. He talked with those of his family who were about him, could be shifted from room to room or even wheeled in a Bath chair through parts of his grounds, and could listen to readings and seem to take an interest in them. Once he insisted on being placed at his writing-table, with paper, pens, and ink before him in the accustomed order, and wanted to be left to himself; but, when the pen had been put into his hand and his fingers refused to hold it, tears trickled down his cheeks, and he gave up the attempt. There were, as often in such cases of brain-paralysis, some days of almost frantic vehemence, when it was painful to be near him; but these were succeeded by a feeble quietude and a gradual ebbing-away of life. On the 21st of September 1832, with the ripple of the Tweed heard by those who stood round his bed, Sir Walter Scott, then only in the sixty-second year of his age, breathed his last.

In the Diary itself the narrative of those closing years of Scott's life is broken short at the point where they were bringing him back from Italy as a dying invalid. The last few months are a total blank in the Diary; where, indeed, the entries for the later years of the included seven are scantier and more intermittent than those for the earlier. But it is not solely as an exact autobiographic record of the incidents of so many memorable years of a memorable life that the Diary is now of interest. Implicated in that main interest, and catching the attention of the reader again and again as he advances through the pages, are certain recurring particular informations as to Scott's character and ways which

possess an independent interest, and may be reverted to separately.

Bound up, for example, with the proofs furnished by the Diary of Scott's prodigious literary industry, there is plenty of minute information as to his habits of composition and his rate of composition. I do not like that word "composition" in any such application, thinking it a miserable word for the description of the process by which a great writer marshals the contents of his mind and commits them to paper; but the word is current, and may serve for the nonce. Well, Scott's rate of composition was about the fastest known in the history of literature. Of all his predecessors in the literary history of the British Islands, Shakespeare seems to have been the likest to him in this particular of fluent facility and swiftness of production. "His "mind and hand went together," is the well-known report concerning Shakespeare by his literary executors and editors: "his mind and hand went together, and "what he thought he uttered with that easiness that we "have scarce received from him a blot in his papers." One has an impression, however, that Shakespeare, with all his facility when he had the pen in his hand, had it less constantly in his hand, was less "*eident*" in the use of it (as our good northern phrase goes), than Scott,—whether because he had less actual need to be "eident," or because verse, which was Shakespeare's main element, is intrinsically more difficult, takes more out of a man in a given time, and so is less favourable to "eidency," than the prose element in which, latterly, Scott worked all but exclusively. At all events, "eidency" and "facility" taken together, the result, in the mere matter of quantity, was larger from Scott's industry than from Shakespeare's. But it is with

the "facility" that we are now concerned, and with the proofs of this "facility" which are furnished by the Journal in particular. The mere look of the handwriting is one of these,—that rapid *currente calamo* look, without hesitation, and with hardly an erasure, stoppage to point, or any such thing, and with the words almost running into each other in their hurry, which is familiar to all who have seen facsimile reproductions of any portions of the copy of Scott's novels, when they were written with his own hand, and not dictated. That, however, is a characteristic common to all his writings; and the specific interest of the Diary in this connection is that it gives us definite information as to the amount of writing per day which Scott usually got through in his *currente calamo* style. In entry after entry there is note of the number of pages he had prescribed to himself as a sufficient day's "task" or "darg," with growls when for any reason he had fallen short of it, and smiles of satisfaction when he had exceeded it; and from one entry we ascertain that his *maximum* per day when he was in good vein was eight pages of his own close manuscript, making forty pages of the usual type in which his copy was set up by the printers. One can compute the difference between that rate and any other rate of which one may happen to have knowledge or experience; but there is no need to conclude that Scott's rate is to be passionately desired or universally aimed at, or that, because it suited Scott, it would suit others. On the contrary, one sees some disadvantages, even in Scott's own case, counterbalancing the advantages of such extreme rapidity. He was aware of the fact himself; and he once quotes, with some approbation, an admirable maxim of Chaucer on the subject:—

"There n' is no werkman, whatsoever he be,
That may both werken well and hastily."

That Scott was an exception,—that he was, like Shakespeare, one of those workmen who *could* work both well and hastily,—was owing doubtless to the fact that, in this also resembling Shakespeare, he brought always to the act of writing a mind already full of matter, and of the very kinds of matter required for his occasions. One has but to recollect the extraordinary range and variety of his readings from his earliest youth, the extraordinary range and variety also of his observations of men and manners, and the extraordinary retentiveness of his memory, to see that never since he had begun authorship could he have had to spin, as so many have to do, the threads of his ideas or imaginations out of a vacuum. At the same time, and this notwithstanding, there is something more to be said, when the comparison is between Scott as an exceptionally rapid worker and Shakespeare as the same. Scott had a standard of the kind of matter that would answer for the purposes of *his* literary productions; and, though a very good standard, it was lower than Shakespeare's standard for *his* writings. When Shakespeare was in the act of writing, or was meditating his themes by himself in the solitude of his chamber, or in his walks over the fields, before he proceeded to the act of writing, we see his mind rolling within itself, like a great sea-wash that would rush through all the deeps and caverns, and search through all the intricacies, of its prior structure and acquisitions,—so ruled and commissioned, however, that what the reflux should fetch back for use should not be any wreckage whatsoever that might be commonly relevant and interesting, but only things of gleaming worth and rarity, presentable

indeed to all, but appreciable in full only by kings and sages. Hear, on the other hand, in Scott's own words, the definition of what satisfied *him* in his dealings with the public. "I am sensible," he wrote, "that, if there "be anything good about my poetry, or prose either, "it is a hurried frankness of composition which pleases "soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active "disposition." That Scott was grossly unfair to himself in this under-estimate will be the verdict now of universal opinion; and I shall have to touch again upon that point presently. Meanwhile there is one other difference to be noted between the two men in respect of that very circumstance of their marked similarity in one characteristic which has led us to view them together. Shakespeare's boundless ease and fluency in writing did not prevent perfection in his literary execution. His grammar, with all its impetuosity and lightness of spring, is logical and accurate to the utmost demands of the most fastidious English scholarship; and, though he would have repudiated with scorn the name "stylist," invented of late as a title of literary honour by some of our critics, and it would be profane to think of him under that execrable and disastrous appellation, he wrote always with the sure cunning of a disciplined artist in verbal expression,—an artist so highly self-disciplined that his art in such matters had become an instinct. Scott's habitual style, on the other hand,—his style when he is not strongly moved either by vehement feeling or by high poetic conception,—is a kind of homely and comfortable slipshod, neglectful of any rule of extreme accuracy, and careless even of the most obvious grammatical solecisms. It is not exactly with reference to this difference between himself and Shakespeare that there

occurs in one passage in his Diary a protest against being compared with Shakespeare at all. But the protest is worth quoting. "*Like* Shakespeare!" he exclaims, noticing the already formed habit of this perilous comparison among his most ardent admirers in his own lifetime,—"*like* Shakespeare! Not fit to tie his brogues!" It was the superlative of compliment on Scott's side; but its very wording may be construed into a certain significance in connection with that point of dissimilarity between the two men to which I have just adverted. Shakespeare never wore "brogues." In our present metaphorical sense, I mean; in the literal sense, I would not be sure but he may have found such articles convenient quite as often as Scott did. There were muddy roads about Stratford-on-Avon as well as about Abbotsford.

It would be wrong not to mention, however briefly, the confirmation furnished by the Journal of all our previous impressions of Scott's high excellence among his fellow-men, not only in the general virtues of integrity, honour, courage, and persevering industry, but also in all those virtues which constitute what we call in a more particular sense *goodness*. "Great and good" is one of our common alliterative phrases; and it is a phrase which we seem to require when we would characterise the kind of human being that is entitled to supreme admiration. We feel that either adjective by itself would be inadequate in such a case, but that the doubling suffices. Another of our alliterative phrases, nearly the same in meaning at root, is "head and heart." Only when there is a conjunction in a human being of what we call "heart" with what we call "intellect" are we quite satisfied even in cases of ordinary experience; and only when there is the

conjunction of "great heart" with "great intellect" do we bow down with absolute veneration before this man or that man of historical celebrity. Common and simple though this word "heart" is, there is a world of unused applicability in it yet in many directions. In the criticism of literature, for example, it supplies a test that would make havoc with some high reputations. There have been, and are, writers of the most indubitable ability, and of every variety of ability, in whose writings, if you search them through and through, though you may find instruction in abundance, novelties of thought in abundance, and amusement in abundance, you will find very little of real "heart." There is no such disappointment when you turn to Scott. Benevolence, charitableness, tolerance, sympathy with those about him in their joys and their sorrows, kindly readiness to serve others when he could, utter absence of envy or real ill-will,—these are qualities that shine out everywhere in his life and in the succession of his writings, and that receive, though they hardly need, additional and more intimate illustration in his Journal. Positively, when I contemplate this richness of heart in Scott, and remember also how free he was all through his life from those moral weaknesses which sometimes accompany and disfigure an unusually rich endowment in this species of excellence,—for, born though he was in an old Scottish age of roughish habits and not over-squeamish speech, and carrying though he did the strong Scottish build of that age, and somewhat of its unabashed joviality, to the very last, his life was exemplary throughout in most particulars of personal conduct,—positively, I say, with all this in my mind, I can express my feeling about Scott no otherwise than by declaring him to

have been one of the very best men that ever breathed.

Of the interest of the miscellaneous contents of the book, as including individual incidents in Scott's life, sketches of the physiognomies and characters of his Edinburgh contemporaries and London contemporaries, descriptions of scenes and places, curious Scottish and other anecdotes, literary criticisms, and expressions of Scott's opinions on public questions and on men and things in general, no adequate idea can be formed except from itself. As to Scott's opinions on all the various questions, public or private, on which he had occasion to make up his mind and express what he felt, we may venture on one general remark. They are shrewd opinions, and often or generally just, —the judgments of a man of strong natural sagacity, and mature business-experience, adhering in the main to use and wont, but ready for an independent consideration of exigencies as they arose, and for any clear and safe improvement. Even in politics, though his partisanship in that department was obdurate, avowed, unflinching, and sometimes uproarious, his shrewdness in the forecast of what was possible, or his private determination in favour of what he thought just and desirable, led him sometimes,—especially where Scottish nationality was concerned, and the Thistle seemed to be insulted,—into dissent from his party, and the proclamation of opinions peculiarly his own. It is when we leave the plain ground of such practical and everyday questions, and either ascend to those higher levels, or descend to those deeper, at which the human intellect finds its powers more hardly tasked,—it is then that we observe what is usually reckoned a defect in Scott in comparison with many

who have been far inferior to him in other intellectual respects. There was little in his mind of what may be called the purely *noetic* organ, that faculty which speculates, investigates, deals with difficult problems of science or philosophy, and seeks in every subject for ultimate principles and a resting-ground of final conclusions. He either refrained from such exercises of mind entirely, or was content with proximate and easily accessible axioms. Even in literary criticism, where he might be supposed to have been most at home, it is sagacious *extempore* judgments that he offers, honest expressions of his own immediate likings or dislikings, rather than suggestions or deductions from any code of reasoned principles. So in matters of higher and more solemn concern. From that simpler kind of philosophy which has been defined as a constant Meditation of Death Scott did not refrain, because no good or serious man can. There is evidence in his Journal that in his solitary hours he allowed himself often enough to lapse into this profoundest of meditations, and rolled through his mind the whole burthen of its everlasting mysteries. But the inscrutable for Scott, in this subject as in others, began at a short distance from his first cogitations or his inherited creed. "I would, if called upon, die a martyr for the Christian Religion," he writes once in his Diary ; and no one can doubt that the words were written with the most earnest sincerity. But, when we interpret them duly by the light of other passages, and of all that we know independently, it is as if we saw Scott standing upright with flushed face and clenched hands, and saying to those about him who might want to trouble him too much on so sacred a subject,—"This is the faith that has been transmitted

to us from far-back generations; this is the faith in which millions of abler men than I am, or than you are, have lived and died; I hold by that faith, without seeking too curiously to define it or to discuss its several tenets; and, if you come too near me, to pester me with your doubts and questionings, and new inquiries and speculations, and all the rest of your clever nineteenth-century metaphysics, I warn you that the soul of all my fathers will rise in me, and I shall become dangerous." In plainer words, on this subject, as on others, it was in Scott's constitution to rest in that kind of wisdom which declines thinking beyond a certain distance.

Here, again, and in a new connection, we come round to Shakespeare. In *him*, no one needs to be reminded, the noetic faculty existed in dimensions absolutely enormous, working wonderfully in conjunction with his equally enormous faculty of imagination, and yet with the incessant alertness, the universal aggressiveness, and the self-enjoying mobility, of a separate mental organ. Hence those glances from heaven to earth and to the underworld which earth conceals, those shafts of reasoned insight into the roots of all things, those lightning gleams of speculation to its last extreme, that wealth of maxims of worldly prudence outrivalling and double-distilling the essence of all that is in Bacon's Essays, those hints and reaches towards an ultimate philosophy both of nature and of human life, which have made Shakespeare's writings till now, and will make them henceforth, a perennial amazement. Well, after what has just been said of Scott, are we bound, on this account, to give up the customary juxtaposition of the two men? Hardly so, I think; for there is a consideration of some import-

ance yet in reserve. I will introduce it by a little anecdote taken from the Journal itself.

People are still alive who have had personal acquaintance with Miss Stirling Graham,—the lady who died as recently as 1877 at the venerable age of ninety-five years, and who, some fifty or sixty years before that, was famous in Edinburgh society for what were called her *mystifications*. These consisted in her power of assuming an imaginary character (generally that of an old Scottish lady), dressing up in that character, appearing so dressed up unexpectedly in any large company in a drawing-room, or even in the private study of some eminent lawyer or judge, and carrying on a long rigmarole conversation in the assumed character with such bewildering effect that her auditor or auditors were completely deceived, and supposed the garrulous intruder to be some crazy eccentric from a country-house or some escaped madwoman. It was on the 7th of March 1828 that Sir Walter Scott witnessed, in the house of Lord Gillies, after dinner, one of those "mystifications" of Miss Stirling Graham; and he describes it in his Journal thus:—"Miss Stirling Græme, a lady of the Duntroon "family, from whom Clavers was descended, looks like "thirty years old, and has a face of the Scottish cast, "with a good expression in point of good sense and "good-humour. Her conversation, so far as I have "had the advantage of hearing it, is shrewd and "sensible, but noways brilliant. She dined with us, "went off as if to the play, and returned in the char-"acter of an old Scottish lady. Her dress and "behaviour were admirable, and her conversation "unique. I was in the secret, of course, and did my "best to keep up the ball; but she cut me out of all

" feather. The prosing account which she gave of her " son, the antiquary, who found an auld wig in a slate-" quarry, was extremely ludicrous; and she puzzled " the Professor of Agriculture with a merciless account " of the succession of crops in the parks around her " old mansion-house. No person to whom the secret " was not entrusted had the least guess of an impost-" ure, except one shrewd young lady present, who " observed the hand narrowly, and saw that it was " plumper than the age of the lady seemed to warrant." From a note appended to this entry by Mr. Douglas we learn what Sir Walter said to Miss Stirling Graham on this occasion, by way of complimenting her on her performance after it was over. "Awa', awa'!" he said; "the Deil's ower grit wi' you." There was, he saw, something supernatural in her when she was in the mood and attitude of her one most congenial function. All the gifts that were latent in the shrewd and sensible-looking, but noways brilliant lady, flashed out upon others, and were revealed even to herself, in the act of her personations.

With the lesson in our minds which this little story supplies, we may return to the matter of Scott's reputed deficiency in the speculative or purely noetic faculty:—Noetic faculty! Noetic fiddlestick! This faculty, with a score of others perhaps for which our meagre science of mind has no names, you will find in Scott too, if you know how to look for them. When and where would you have looked for the noetic faculty in Nelson? Not, certainly, as he was to be seen in common life, a little man of slouching gait, with his empty right arm-sleeve pinned to his breast, and gravely propounding as an unanswerable argument in his own experience for the immateriality of the soul

the fact that, though there was now an interval of half a yard from the stump of his lost arm and the place where his fingers had been, he could still sometimes feel twitches of rheumatism in those merely spectral finger-tips. No! but see him on his own great wooden three-decker, as he was taking her into action between the enemy's lines, when the battle-roar and the battle-flashes had brought the electric shiver through his veins, and he stood among his sailors transmuted into the real Nelson, seamanship incarnate and a fighting demigod! So, with the necessary difference for the purpose now in view, in the case of Scott. His various faculties of intellect were involved inextricably somehow in that imaginative faculty which he did possess, and also in enormous degree, in common with Shakespeare. When Scott was engaged on any of his greater works,—a *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, a *Marmion*, a *Lady of the Lake*, a *Waverley*, a *Guy Mannering*, an *Antiquary*, an *Old Mortality*, a *Heart of Midlothian*, an *Ivanhoe*, or a *Redgauntlet*,—when he was so engaged, and when the poetic phrenzy had seized him strongly,—then what happened? Why, then that imaginative faculty which seemed to be the whole of him, or the best of him, revealed itself somehow as not a single faculty, but a complex composition of various faculties, some of them usually dormant. This it did by visibly splitting itself, resolving itself, into the multiplicity of which it was composed; and then the plain every-day man of the tall upright head, sagacious face, and shaggy eyebrows, was transmuted, even to his own surprise, into a wizard that could range and speculate,—range and speculate incalculably. It was, I say, as if then there were loosened within him, out of his one supposed faculty of phantasy, a simultaneous

leash of other faculties, a noetic faculty included, that could spring to incredible distances from his ordinary self, each pursuing its appropriate prey, finding it, seizing it, sporting with it, and coiling it back obediently to the master's feet. In some such way, I think, must be explained the splendour of the actual achievements of Scott's genius, the moderate dimensions of his purely reasoning energy in all ordinary circumstances notwithstanding. His reasoning energy was locked up organically, let us say, in his marvellous imagination. And so, remembering all that Scott has left us,—those imperishable tales and romances which no subsequent successes in the British literature of fiction have superseded, and by the glamour of which his own little land of brown heath and shaggy wood, formerly of small account in the world, has become a dream and fascination for all the leisurely of all the nations,—need we cease, after all, from thinking of him in juxtaposition, due interval allowed, with England's greatest man, the whole world's greatest man, of the literary order, or abandon the habit of speaking of Sir Walter Scott as our Scottish Shakespeare?

CARLYLE'S EDINBURGH LIFE[1]

PART I.—1809-1818

EARLY in November 1809 two boys walked together from Ecclefechan in Dumfriesshire to Edinburgh, to attend the classes in the University there. The distance, as the crow flies, is about sixty miles; and the boys took three days to it. The elder, who had been at College in the previous session, and therefore acted as the guide, generally stalked on a few paces ahead, whistling an Irish tune to himself. The younger, who was not quite fourteen years of age, and had never been out of Dumfriesshire before, followed rather wearily, irritated by the eternal Irish tune in front of him, but mainly given up to his own "bits of reflections in the silence of the moors and hills." The elder of the two boys was a Thomas Smail, afterwards of some note as a Burgher minister in Galloway; the younger was Thomas Carlyle.

Of the arrival of the two boys in Edinburgh on the 9th of November 1809, after their third day's walk of twenty miles, and of Carlyle's first stroll, that afternoon, under Smail's convoy, through some of the main streets, to see the sights, one may read in his own *Reminiscences*. What he remembered best of that first stroll was the look of the Old High Street, with St. Giles's

[1] From *Macmillan's Magazine* for November and December 1881 and January 1882.

Kirk on one side and the old Luckenbooths running up the middle in its broadest part, but chiefly the amazing spectacle to which he was introduced when Smail pushed open a door behind St. Giles's Kirk, and he found himself in the outer house of the Court of Session, amid the buzz of the lawyers and others walking up and down, with the red-robed judges hearing cases in their little throned enclosures.

Content with the description of that first stroll, he leaves us to imagine how, in the first days and weeks of his residence in the city, he gradually extended his acquaintance with it by further rambles, and by inspection of this and that interesting to a young stranger. The task is not difficult. The lodging which Smail and he had taken between them was, he says, "a clean-looking, most cheap lodging," in the "poor locality" called Simon Square. The locality still survives under that name, though hardly as a square any longer, but only a poor street, at the back of Nicolson Street, on the left hand as one goes southwards from the University, and accessible most directly by an arched passage called Gibb's Entry. From that obscure centre, by walks from it in the mornings, and returns to it during the day and in the evenings, we can see the little Dumfriesshire fellow gradually conquering for himself some notion of the whole of that Edinburgh into which he had come. It was the old Edinburgh, of less than 100,000 inhabitants, which we think of so fondly now as the Edinburgh of Scott before his novels had been heard of and when his fame depended chiefly on his poems, of Jeffrey in the early heyday of his lawyership and editorship of the *Edinburgh Review*, and of the other local celebrities, Whig and Tory, immortalised in tradition and in Cockburn's *Memorials*.

It was chiefly of the externals of the city that the boy was making his notes; for the living celebrities, as he tells us, were hardly even names to him then. Scott and Jeffrey, he says, may have been in the peripatetic crowd of wigged and gowned lawyers he had seen in the hall of the Parliament House on the day of his arrival; but the only physiognomy he had marked there so as to know it again was that of John Clerk of Eldin. A reminiscence which I have heard from his own lips enables me, however, to connect his first days in Edinburgh with the memory of at least one Edinburgh worthy of a still elder generation. It was on the 18th of December 1809, or just six weeks after Carlyle's arrival in Edinburgh, that the well-known Dr. Adam, Rector of the High School, died; and I have heard Carlyle tell how the event impressed him, and how he went to see the funeral procession of the old scholar start from the High School yard at the foot of Infirmary Street. With a number of other boys, he said, he hung on by the railings outside, looking in upon the gathered assemblage of mourners. He seemed to remember the scene with peculiar vividness; for, after picturing himself as a boy hanging on by the High School railings, and watching the incidents within, he added, "Ay me! that moment then, and this now, and nothing but the rushing of Time's wings between!"[1] He had a liking to the last for

[1] Another incident which he told me of his first boyish saunterings about Edinburgh is more trivial in itself, but of some interest as showing his observant habits and sense of humour at that early age:—For some purpose or other, he was going down Leith Walk, the long street of houses, stone-yards, and gaps of vacant space, which leads from Edinburgh to its sea-port of Leith. In front of him, and also walking towards Leith, was a solid, quiet-looking countryman. They had not gone far from Edinburgh when there advanced to them from the opposite direction a sailor, so drunk that he needed the whole breadth of the

old Dr. Adam. I have heard him say that any Scotsman who was at a loss on the subject of *shall* and *will* would find the whole doctrine in a nutshell in two or three lucid sentences of Dr. Adam's Latin Grammar; and I had an idea at the time that he had used this brief precept of Dr. Adam's little book in his own early practice of English.

At the date of Dr. Adam's death Carlyle had been for six weeks a student in the University, with pupils of Dr. Adam among his fellow-students on the same benches. One can see his matriculation signature, "Thomas Carlyle," in his own hand,—a clear and good boyish hand, differing considerably from that which he afterwards wrote,—in the alphabetically arranged matriculation list of the Arts Students of the session 1809-10. It is the sixth signature under the letter C, the immediately preceding signature being that of a Dumfries youth named "Irvine Carlyle" (spelt so, and not "Irving Carlyle,") of whom there is mention in the *Reminiscences*. It is clear that the two Carlyles were drawn to each other by community of name and county, if not by kin, and had gone up for matriculation together.

The College of those days was not the present complete quadrangle, but a chaotic jumble of inconvenient old class-rooms, with only parts of the present building risen among them, and finished and occupied. The classes which Carlyle attended in his first session were the 1st Humanity Class, under Professor Alexander Christison, and the 1st Greek Class,

footpath to himself. Taking some umbrage at the countryman, the sailor came to a stop, and addressed him suddenly, "Go to H——," looking him full in the face. "'Od, man, I'm gaun to Leith," said the countryman, as if merely pleading a previous engagement, and walked on, Carlyle following him and evading the sailor.

under Professor George Dunbar. From an examination of the records I find that among his class-fellows in both classes were the aforesaid Irving Carlyle, and Lord Inverurie, afterwards seventh Earl of Kintore, and that among his class-fellows in the 1st Greek Class was the late venerable Earl of Wemyss, then Lord Elcho. Neither from the records nor from the *Reminiscences* can anything be gathered of the history of the two classes through the session, or of the place taken in each by the young Dumfriesshire boy among the medley of his fellow-students, from 150 to 200 in number. The Latin class-room, we do learn from the *Reminiscences*, was a very dark room, so that Professor Christison, having two students of the name of Carlyle, never succeeded in distinguishing the one from the other; which was all the harder, Carlyle thought, because the other Carlyle, Mr. Irving Carlyle, was not only different physically, being "an older, considerably bigger boy, with red hair, wild buck teeth, and scorched complexion," but was also the worst Latinist in the whole class. Carlyle himself had been so well grounded in Latin at Annan School that probably he could have held his own in the class even against Dr. Adam's pupils from the Edinburgh High School. To the end of his life, at all events, he was a fair Latinist. To Greek he never in later life made any pretence; and whatever Greek he did learn from Dunbar,—which can have been but small in quantity,—must have faded through disuse. He retained, however, a high admiration for the *Elementa Linguæ Græcæ* of Dr. James Moor of Glasgow,—which was, I suppose, the Greek grammar then used in Dunbar's class,—thinking it the very best grammar of any language for teaching purposes he had ever seen.

While we know so little of Carlyle's Greek and Latin studies in his first University session, it is something to know that he was a pretty diligent reader of books that session from the College Library. Having examined a dusty old folio of the library receipts and outgoings, which chances to have been preserved, I am able to report that Carlyle had duly paid, before December 1809, his deposit or security of one guinea, entitling him to take books out, and that, in that month and the succeeding month of January 1810, he had out the following books, in parcels or in succession, in the following order:— Robertson's *History of Scotland*, vol. ii.; Cook's *Voyages*; Byron's *Narrative*, *i.e.* "the Hon. John Byron's Narrative of the Great Distresses suffered by Himself and his Companions on the Coast of Patagonia, 1740-6"; the first volume of Gibbon; two volumes of Shakespeare; a volume of the *Arabian Nights*; Congreve's Works; another volume of the *Arabian Nights*; two volumes of Hume's *England*; *Gil Blas*; a third volume of Shakespeare; and a volume of the *Spectator*. This is a sufficiently remarkable series of volumes for a boy of fourteen to have had out from the College library; and other books from other libraries may have been lying at the same time on the table in the small room in Simon Square which he shared with Tom Smail. What is most remarkable is the run upon books of voyages and travels, and on classic books of English literature, or books of mere literary amusement, rather than on academic books. Clearly there had been a great deal of previous and very miscellaneous reading at Ecclefechan and Annan, with the already formed result of a passion for reading,

and very decided notions and tastes as to the kinds of books that might be worth looking after. But how, whether at Ecclefechan or in Annan, had the sedate boy been attracted to Congreve?

At the close of Carlyle's first college session in April 1810 he returned to Ecclefechan. He was met on the road near the village, as he tells us so touchingly in his *Reminiscences*, by his father, who had walked out, "with a red plaid about him," on the chance of seeing Tom coming; and the whole of the vacation was spent by him at home in his father's house. It is not, therefore, till the beginning of the session of 1810-11 that we again hear of him in Edinburgh. He then duly matriculated for his second session, his signature again standing in the alphabetical Arts matriculation-list immediately after that of his namesake "Irving Carlyle" (now spelt so). His classes for this session were the 1st Mathematical Class, under Professor John Leslie, and the Logic Class, under Professor David Ritchie; and I have found no note of his having gone back that year, or any other, for a second course of Latin from Professor Christison. In the 1st Mathematical Class, consisting of seventy students, he had again Irving Carlyle on the benches with him; in the Logic Class, consisting of 194 students, the same Irving Carlyle was one of his fellow-students, and the late Earl of Wemyss was another. What he made of the Logic Class we have not the least intimation; and it is only by inference that we know that he must have distinguished himself in the Mathematical Class and given evidences there of his unusual mathematical ability. As before, however, he found variation, or diversion, from his work for the classes by diligent reading in his lodgings.

Between Saturday the 1st December 1810 and Saturday 9th March 1811, I find, he took from the University library the following books in the following order:— *Voyages and Travels*, the 15th volume of some collection under that name; a volume of Fielding's works; a volume of Smollett; Reid's *Inquiry into the Human Mind*; a book called *Scotland Described*; two more volumes of Fielding's works; Locke's *Essay* in folio; another volume of Fielding; a volume of *Anacharsis, i.e.*, of an English Translation of the Abbé Barthélémy's Travels of Anacharsis the Younger in Greece during the middle of the Fourth Century before the Christian Era"; and a volume of some translation of *Don Quixote*. His choice of books, it will be seen, is still very independent. Reid's *Inquiry* and Locke's *Essay* connect themselves with the work in the Logic Class; but the other volumes were evidently for mere amusement. Whether it was still in the lodging in Simon Square, and with Smail for his chum, that these books were read, is uncertain. His comradeship with Smail continued, indeed, he tells us, over two sessions; but the lodging may have been changed. It was still, doubtless, somewhere near the University.

For the session of 1811-12 the Matriculation Book is not alphabetically in Faculties, but general or mixed for the three Faculties of Arts, Law, and Medicine. There were 1475 students for those three Faculties conjointly; and "Thomas Carlyle, Ecclefechan," appears among them, his matriculation number being 966. That session, his third at the University, he attended the 2d Greek Class, under Dunbar, the 2d Mathematical Class, under Leslie, and the Moral Philosophy Class, under Dr. Thomas Brown. In the Greek Class, which consisted of 189 students,

he had among his class-fellows the late venerable Sir Robert Christison, Sir Robert's twin-brother, Alexander Christison, the late Earl of Wemyss again, his brother, the Honourable Walter Charteris, a Thomas Murray from Kirkcudbrightshire, afterwards a well-known citizen of Edinburgh, the inextinguishable Irving Carlyle, and an Andrew Combe, whom I identify with the subsequently well-known Dr. Andrew Combe, the brother of George Combe the phrenologist. In the Mathematical Class, which numbered forty-six, there were several Dumfriesshire students besides himself; and it was in this 2d Mathematical Class, if the tradition is correct, that Carlyle took the first prize,—another Dumfriesshire youth, who lived in the same lodging with him, taking the second. I have turned with most interest, in this session, to the "List of Students attending Dr. Thomas Brown's Class," preserved in the peculiarly neat, small hand-writing of Dr. Brown himself. It was the second session of Brown's full tenure of the Professorship of Moral Philosophy in succession to Dugald Stewart, and the fame of his lectures was at its highest. The class consisted of 151 students; and among them, besides Carlyle and his inseparable Irving Carlyle, and a Robert Mitchell and a Paulus Aemilius Irving, both from Dumfriesshire, there were Duncan McNeill, afterwards Lord Colonsay, his brother, John McNeill, Sir Andrew Agnew, David Welsh, afterwards Dr. David Welsh and Professor of Church History, and a James Bisset from Aberdeenshire, whom I identify with the late Rev. Dr. Bisset of Bourtie. Some of these were outsiders, already in the Divinity or Law Classes, who had returned to the Moral Philosophy Class for the benefit of Dr. Brown's brilliant lectures,

—notably young David Welsh, who had already attended the class for two sessions, but was full of enthusiasm for Brown, whose biographer and editor he was to be in time. Carlyle, I am sorry to say, was not one of the admirers of the brilliant Brown. Over and over again I have heard him speak of Brown, and always with mimicry and contempt, as "a finical man they called Brown, or sometimes Missy Brown, that used to spout poetry." This can hardly have been out of disregard for metaphysics as such, for he had much respect for Dugald Stewart, the then retired professor. The dislike seems to have been partly personal, partly to the new kind of highly ingenious metaphysics which Brown was trying to substitute for the older and more orthodox Scottish Philosophy of Reid and Stewart. At all events, it is worthy of note that those brilliant lectures of Thomas Brown, which James Mill and John Stuart Mill admired so much in their published form, regarding them as an introduction to much that is best in modern British Philosophy, had no effect, in their actual delivery, on the hard-headed young Carlyle, but fell upon him as mere dazzle and moonshine.

As Carlyle tells us incidentally that he was in Edinburgh in the summer of 1812, it is to be supposed that he spent less of that vacation than usual in his Dumfriesshire home. I find also that he matriculated rather late in our books for the session of 1812-13, his name not appearing in the first or main matriculation list, but only in a supplementary list, and then as "Thomas Carlyle, Hoddam, Dumfriesshire." His father had by that time given up his trade of mason, and had left Ecclefechan to try a small farm in the neighbourhood. The number of students matriculated

that year in the three faculties of Arts, Law, and Medicine, was 1503; and Carlyle's matriculation number was 1403. The classes in which he was enrolled for that session, his fourth and last in Arts, were Leslie's 2d Mathematical Class (attended a second time, we may suppose, for such higher instruction as might be fit for very advanced students), and the Natural Philosophy Class, under Professor John Playfair. In this last session, accordingly, as a student only of Mathematics and Physics, with no distraction towards either Classics or Mental Philosophy, Carlyle may be said to have been in his element. He worked very hard in both classes, and distinguished himself in both. My own impression, from talks with him on the subject, is that he was, by acknowledgment of professors and fellow-students, easily supreme in both. Leslie's second class that year numbered but forty-one students, and it was natural that his most distinguished student in two previous sessions should now be familiar with him and receive his especial notice. Certain it is that of all the Professors of Edinburgh University in Carlyle's time Leslie was the only one of whom he spoke always with something of real gratitude and affection. The affection was mixed, indeed, with a kind of laughing remembrance of Leslie's odd, corpulent figure, and odd rough ways; and he would describe with particular gusto the occasional effects of Leslie's persistent habit of using hair-dyes, as when a streak of pink or green would be observable amid the dark-brown or black on those less accessible parts of his head where the chemicals had been too liberally or too rashly applied. But he had a real esteem for Leslie's great abilities, and remembered

him as a man to whose mathematical instructions, and to whose private kindness, he owed much.—— A greater hero with him in Pure Mathematics than even Leslie, I may mention parenthetically, was the now totally-forgotten John West, who had been assistant-teacher of Mathematics in the University of St. Andrews for some time from about 1780 onwards, and of whom Leslie, Ivory, and all the other ablest mathematicians sent forth from that University, had been pupils. Of this man, whom he knew of only by tradition, but whom he regarded as, after Robert Simson of Glasgow, the most original geometrical genius there had been in Scotland, I have heard him talk I know not how often. He would sketch West's life, from the time of his hard and little-appreciated labours at St. Andrews to his death in the West Indies, whither he had emigrated in despair for some chaplaincy or the like; he would avow his belief that Leslie had derived some of his best ideas from that poor man; and he expressed pleasure at finding I knew something of West independently, and had a copy of West's rare *Elements of Mathematics*, published in 1784. That book, obsolete now, was, I have no doubt, a manual with Carlyle while he was studying Mathematics in Edinburgh University, as I chance to know it had been with Dr. Chalmers at St. Andrews in *his* earlier mathematical days.—— Of Leslie's colleague, the celebrated Playfair, formerly in the Mathematical Chair, but since 1805 in that of Natural Philosophy, Carlyle had a less affectionate recollection personally than of Leslie. Sharing, I believe, the common opinion of Playfair's great merits, and minutely acquainted with the facts of his life, as indeed he was with the biographies of all persons of any mark with

whom he had come into contact, he rather resented a piece of injustice which he thought Playfair had done to himself. There were 131 students in the Natural Philosophy Class in 1812-13; and Carlyle, as he assured me, was single in that whole number for having performed and given in every one of all the prescribed exercises, mathematical or other. Another Dumfriesshire student, who came next to him, had failed in one, and that the most difficult. Naturally, at the end of the session, he expected that his certificate would correspond to his distinction in the class; and it was of some consequence to him that it should. But, when he called at Playfair's house for the certificate, and it was delivered to him by a man-servant, he was a good deal disappointed. The usual form of the wording for a good student was to the effect that the Professor certified that so-and-so had attended the class in such and such a session and had "made good proficiency in his studies." In Carlyle's case there was a certain deviation from this form, but only to the effect that he had attended the class and that the Professor "*had reason to know* that he had made good proficiency in his studies." I can remember Carlyle's laugh as he told me of this delicate distinction; and I have always treasured the anecdote as a lesson for professors. They ought to be very careful not only in noting talent on the benches before them, but also in *signifying* what they have noted, if only because, as in Playfair's case, they may be sometimes entertaining an angel unawares, and some angels have severe memories.

We have thus brought Carlyle to the summer of 1813, when he had completed his Arts course in the

University of Edinburgh, and was in the eighteenth year of his age. Though qualified, according to the present standard, for the degree of M.A., he did not take it; but in that he was not in the least singular. In those days hardly any Edinburgh student ever thought of taking a degree in Arts; as far as Edinburgh University was concerned, the M.A. degree had fallen into almost complete disuse; and not till within very recent memory has it become customary again. After his course in Arts, therefore, Carlyle, with 95 per cent of those of his contemporaries who had passed the same course, was in the position merely of a *virtual* M.A., who had obtained the best education in Literature, Science, and Philosophy that the Edinburgh University could afford. His own estimate of the worth of that was not very high. Without assuming that he meant the university described in *Sartor Resartus* to stand literally for the Edinburgh University of his own experience, we have seen enough to show that any specific training of much value he considered himself to owe to his four years in the Arts classes in Edinburgh University was the culture of his mathematical faculty under Leslie, and that, for the rest, he acknowledged merely a certain benefit from having been in so many class-rooms, where matters intellectual were professedly in the atmosphere, and where he learnt to take advantage of books. "What I have "found the University did for me," he said definitely in his *Rectorial Address* of 1866, "is that it taught "me to read, in various languages, in various sciences, "so that I could go into the books which treated of "these things, and gradually penetrate into any "department I wanted to make myself master of, as I "found it suit me." Similarly, in his *Sartor Resartus*,

he made Teufelsdröckh declare that his chief benefit at the University had been from his private use of the University library. "From the chaos of that library "I succeeded in fishing up more books perhaps than "had been known to the very keepers thereof. The "foundation of a literary life was hereby laid: I "learned, on my own strength, to read fluently in "almost all cultivated languages, on almost all subjects "and sciences." This may describe Carlyle's own use of the University library all in all, but hardly his use of it during the four years of his Arts course. Only in Latin and French, and to some small extent in Greek, could he then have ranged beyond English in his readings; nor can his readings, in whatever language, have been then so vast and miscellaneous as Teufelsdröckh's. We have seen, on the irrefragable evidence of preserved registers, what were the books, numbering between twenty and thirty volumes in all, which he actually took out from the University library in the first two winter-sessions of his course; and, though the series is very interesting, with some signs even of oddity, it contains hardly a book that the librarians would have had any difficulty in "fishing up." I regret that, from the destruction or at least the disappearance of the library registers for a considerable lapse of years immediately after Carlyle's second session, I am unable to exhibit his readings in his third and fourth sessions. The list for those two sessions, when he was passing from his sixteenth year to his eighteenth, and had been bitten by mathematics and physical science, would doubtless have been even more interesting, and probably more extensive and various, than that for the two sessions preceding. That he did continue to be a very diligent reader from the College library I positively

know. He used to draw a ludicrous picture of the library accommodations of those days, when the books were in one of the surviving old buildings on one side of the present quadrangle. As I understood him, the students came at definite hours, and ranged themselves in *queue* in some passage, or at some entry, waiting for the opening of the door, and perhaps battering at it when the sub-librarian inside was dilatory. He was a sulky gentleman, of Celtic blood and stout build, who regarded the readers as his natural enemies; and, when he did open the door, he generally presented himself in *rear* to the impatient crowd, taking care to bend his body at the final moment so as to administer one last impediment of contempt for the entrants and send some of them sprawling. That was the kind of encouragement to reading, by Carlyle's account, that he and other University students had in those days. To the end of his life he was all but savage in his resentment of difficulties thrown in the way of access to books by those who had charge of them; and the great Panizzi of the British Museum came in for a good deal of his wrath in private on this account.

"Entertaining an angel unawares" is the phrase I have used to indicate the relations of Carlyle's teachers in the University to the then unknown young man that sat in their class-rooms. In fact, Carlyle, when he left the University in 1813, a virtual M.A., aged seventeen years and four months, was already potentially the very Carlyle we now revere, in consequence of his subsequent life, as one of the greatest and noblest spirits of his generation. Not yet at his full stature (which, when I knew him first in his yet unbent manhood, was over five feet eleven inches), and of thin, lean, rather gaunt frame

(he told me himself he had never weighed more than about ten stone), he was a youth of as great faculty, as noble promise, as Scotland had produced since her Burns, born in 1759, and her Scott, born in 1771. This, or something very little short of this, seems to have been already recognised by those who knew him intimately. They were not many; for he was of peculiarly proud, shy, and reserved ways, if not even morose and unsocial. Poverty also kept him back. It was not for an Ecclefechan lad, chumming with one or two others in like circumstances in a poor lodging in Simon Square, or some other Old Town locality, and receiving his meagre supplies from home, to mix much with general Edinburgh society. The celebrities of that society, indeed, were no longer strangers to him by name or sight, as they had been on his first Edinburgh walk with Smail in 1809. He mentions particularly that Jeffrey's face and figure had been quite familiar to him since 1811 by visits to the Parliament House; and the same visits, or walks in Princes Street, must have made him familiar with the face and figure of Scott, and the faces and figures of not a few others that were among the civic somebodies of their time. But it was by sight only, and by no more introduction than he had to Arthur Seat or Holyrood House, that he knew those important personages; and into the circles in which they moved he had never entered. Even the Professors of the University, if we except Leslie, seem to have been known to him only by their aspects in college or the vicinity. Further, his acquaintanceships among his fellow-students do not appear to have been numerous. He is not known to have been a member of any

of the literary and debating societies which in those days, as in these, were so important an appendage to the apparatus of lectures, class-rooms, and library, and which draw young men together so congenially for the exchange of ideas, the exercise of oratory, and the formation of lasting friendships between kindred souls. His habits were those of solitary reading and musing, with intercourse only with a few companions, clannishly selected for the most part from among the Dumfriesshire or Galloway lads who could claim him as their district-compatriot, whose families he knew, and with one or other of whom he had made his pedestrian journeys homewards at the ends of the sessions. Smail has now vanished from his side; and we hear chiefly of James Johnstone, afterwards schoolmaster of Haddington, the Robert Mitchell already mentioned as one of his fellow-students in the Moral Philosophy class, a Thomas Mitchell, afterwards one of the classical masters in the Edinburgh Academy, and the Thomas Murray already mentioned as having been with him in the 2d Greek class. To these has to be added, on the faith of certain extant letters, a certain clever and whimsical fellow-student of the name of Hill, who used to delight in signing himself "Peter Pindar." In the circle of these, and of others whose names are forgotten, young Carlyle, at the time of his leaving college, was already an object of admiration and respect passing all that is ordinary in such cases of juvenile *camaraderie*. Intellectually and morally, he had impressed them as absolutely *unique* among them all,—such a combination of strength of character, rugged independence of manner, prudence, great literary powers, high aspirations and ambition, habitual

despondency, and a variety of other humours, ranging from the ferociously sarcastic to the wildly tender, that it was impossible to set limits to what he was likely to become in the world.

The proofs are extant in documents of a date only a few months in advance of our present point. On the 1st of January 1814, the above-mentioned Hill, who seems to have been the freest and most jocose in his style of address to Carlyle, and had nicknamed him "The Dean" or "The Doctor," by some implied comparison with Dean Swift, wrote to him as follows.—"You mention some two or "three disappointments you have met with lately. "For shame, sir, to be so peevish and splenetic! "Your disappointments are trifles light as air when "compared with the vexations and disappointments "*I* have experienced." Again, in a letter dated the 9th of May in the same year, he begins:—"Dear "Doctor, I received yours last night; and a scurrilous, "blackguardly, flattering, vexing, pernickety, humorous, "witty, daft letter it is. Shall I answer it piecemeal, "as a certain Honourable House does a speech from "its sovereign, by echoing back each syllable? No; "this won't do. Oh! how I envy you, Dean, that "you can run on in such an off-hand way, ever varying "the scene with wit and mirth, while honest Peter "must hold on in one numskull track to all eternity, "pursuing the even tenor of his way, so that one of "Peter's letters is as good as a thousand."[1] More significant and serious is the following from one of the preserved letters to Carlyle by his friend Thomas Murray, the date "July 27," and presumably of the

[1] Quoted by Mr. Froude in his article, "The Early Life of Thomas Carlyle," in the *Nineteenth Century* for July 1881.

year 1814:—"I have had the pleasure of receiving, "my dear Carlyle, your very humorous and friendly "letter, a letter remarkable for vivacity, a Shandean "turn of expression, and an affectionate pathos, which "indicate a peculiar turn of mind, make sincerity "doubly striking, and wit doubly poignant. You "flatter me with saying my letter was good; but "allow me to observe that among all my elegant "and respectable correspondents there is none whose "manner of letter-writing I so much envy as yours. "A happy flow of language, either for pathos, descrip- "tion, or humour, and an easy, graceful current of "ideas appropriate to every subject, characterise your "style. This is not adulation; I speak what I think. "Your letters will always be a feast to me, a varied "and exquisite repast; and the time, I hope, will "come, but I trust is far distant, when these, our "juvenile epistles, will be read and publicly applauded "by a generation unborn, and the name of Carlyle at "least will be inseparably connected with the Literary "History of the Nineteenth Century."[1] Strangely enough, Carlyle's answer to this letter has survived, and it is no less memorable:—"Oh Tom!" it says, "what a foolish flattering creature thou art! To talk "of future eminence in connection with the Literary "History of the Nineteenth Century to such a one "as me! Alas! my good lad, when I and all my "fancies and reveries and speculations shall have been "swept over by the besom of oblivion, the Literary "History of no century will feel itself the worse. Yet "think not, because I talk thus, I am careless about "literary fame. No, Heaven knows that, ever since "I have been able to form a wish, the wish of being

[1] Quoted by Mr. Froude, *ut supra.*

"known has been the foremost. O Fortune! thou "that givest unto each his portion on this dirty "planet, bestow, if it shall please thee, coronets "and crowns, and principalities and purses, and "pudding and power, upon the great and noble and "fat ones of the earth; grant *me* that, with a heart "of independence, unyielding to thy favours and "unbending to thy frowns, I may attain to literary "fame,—and, though starvation be my lot, I will smile "that I have not been born a King."[1]

Brave words these from the moody lad we saw, not five years ago, plodding up to Edinburgh from Ecclefechan, hardly fourteen years of age, with Tom Smail for pilot. From these words, and from the letters from Hill and Murray with which they connect themselves, we learn two things which I think we should have hardly known otherwise. One is the fact of Carlyle's decisive passion for literature at this early period of his life, and of his reputation then among his intimates for great powers and acquirements of the purely literary kind. My own fancy, confirmed by one particular talk I had with him during a walk along the Thames Embankment and in the Temple Gardens, had rather been that the passion for literature came latish in his case, and that his original bent had been wholly the mathematical. He certainly did tell me that he had not cared much for poetry, or thought much about matters verbal, till the enthusiasm of an older companion, who used to recite Campbell's lyrics

[1] Printed in an appendix to Mr. Moncure D. Conway's Memoir of Carlyle (1881), with other fragments of letters which had been copied from the originals by Mr. Alexander Ireland of Manchester, and which Mr. Ireland put at Mr. Conway's disposal. The date of this fragment is "August 1814"; and, as it is evidently a reply to Murray's letter of "July 27," I have ventured to dissent from Mr. Froude's conjectural addition of "1816?" to the dating of that letter.

and dwell with ecstasy on their beauties, came as a revelation to him and set him on fire with a similar passion. My mistake must have been in post-dating the reminiscence. He must have referred, I now see, not to so late a period as that of his college life in Edinburgh, but to the previous days of his mere boyhood in Ecclefechan and at Annan school. Indeed, we have already seen, in the list of his readings from the college library in his first two sessions, that he must have brought with him to the University some strongly formed literary tastes and likings of Ecclefechan and Annan origin. Connecting this piece of evidence with that of the just-quoted letters of himself and his friends in 1814, we are entitled, I think, now to assume the literary stratum to have been the deeper and more primitive in Carlyle's constitution, and the mathematical vein to have been a superposition upon that. At all events, it is clear that in 1814, when he had concluded his Arts course in the University, it was for his literary powers that he was the wonder of his little circle, and it was on those powers that he set most store himself. For the letters reveal to us yet a second contradiction of what we might have supposed otherwise. No man was ever more contemptuous of fame, and especially of literary fame, than Carlyle was in conversation in his later life. The very phrase "desire for fame," or any synonym for it, if used in his presence as the name of a worthy motive to exertion of any kind, would have provoked his most scathing scorn. He had no patience for "that last infirmity of noble mind," and would have regarded even such a designation for the feeling as much too honourable. Yet, as we have seen, he had not escaped the malady himself. Call the ambition after fame by the homeliest

name of sarcasm you please,—call it the measles of budding genius,—and the fact, on the evidence of Carlyle's own confession, is that the attack in his case had been even more severe than it had been in the case of Burns, much more severe than we know it to have been in the case of Scott, and quite as severe as the records show it to have been in the case of young Chalmers. The condition of his mind, in his nineteenth year, with all his moodiness, all his self-despondency, was that of settled literary ambition, an appetency after literary distinction all but enormous. That this rested on honest consciousness of his own extraordinary powers, and was accompanied by a resolve, as deep as was ever in any young man's heart, that the fame for which he craved should be won, if won at all, only by noble and manly methods, there is no room for doubt. There we see him standing, an unknown youth, teeth clenched and face determined, fronting the world, and anticipating his own future in it, with something of that feeling which, call it what we may, and smile at it as any one may in the retrospect, has probably, by God's own ordinance, filled every great and honest heart at the outset of a great career :—

> Lay the vain impostors low!
> Blockheads fall in every foe;
> Splendour comes with every blow;
> Let me do or die.

Meanwhile the near future was not very inspiring. Hardly by any wish of his own, but in deference to the fond hopes of his father and mother, and to those social necessities which made the clerical career the only natural and possible one in those days for an educated Scottish youth from the humbler ranks, Carlyle had proceeded to qualify himself for the

ministry. Not, however, for the ministry in that Non-conforming communion, called "the Burgher Seceders," to which his parents belonged, but, apparently with no objection on their part, in the Established or National Scottish Church.[1] Now, the regular qualification for the ministry of the Scottish Church in those days, after a student had passed his Arts course in the University, consisted in further attendance for four winter-sessions in the Divinity Hall of one of the Universities, for instruction in Theology, Hebrew, and Church History, and for the delivery of so many trial-discourses, one in Latin and the rest in English, at appointed intervals. But, to accommodate students whose means made it difficult for them to reside in town during four consecutive winters, there was a device of "partial sessions," by which a certain small amount of personal appearance in the Divinity Hall, if protracted over six sessions, and duly signalised by delivery of the required discourses, was accepted as sufficient. By the former plan, Carlyle, entering the Divinity Hall in Edinburgh in the session 1813-14, immediately after his last session in Arts, would have been a qualified probationer

[1] The first secession from the National Presbyterian Church of Scotland, as established at the Revolution, was in 1733, when differences on account of matters of administration, rather than any difference of theological doctrine, led to the foundation by Ebenezer Erskine of the dissenting communion called *The Associate Presbytery* or *Secession Church.* In 1747 this communion split itself, on the question of the obligation of the members to take a certain civil oath, called The Burgher's Oath, into two portions, calling themselves respectively the *Associate* or *Burgher Synod* and the *General Associate* or *Anti-Burgher Synod.* The former in 1799 sent off a detachment from itself called the *Original Burgher Synod* or *Old Light Burghers*, the main body remaining as the *Associate Burgher Synod*; and it was to the second that Carlyle's parents belonged, their pastor in Ecclefechan being that Rev. Mr. Johnston to whose memory Carlyle has paid such a tribute of respect, and whose grave is now to be seen in Ecclefechan churchyard, near Carlyle's own.

or preacher in the Scottish Church, and eligible for a fixed parochial charge, in 1817, *i.e.* in his twenty-second year. The other plan, however, permitting him to find some occupation out of Edinburgh, if it could be had, and so to spare his parents further expense in his education, was altogether the more convenient. His connection with Edinburgh was not yet over; but it was to be continued only in the form of such occasional visits through six years as might enable him to pass as "licentiate" or "probationer" in 1819, *i.e.* in his twenty-fourth year. *That*, however he may have reconciled it to his ambition or to his conscience, was his immediate worldly outlook.

Divinity students did not need to register in the general Matriculation Book of the University, as the Arts, Medicine, and Law students did; and so we have not that means of tracing Carlyle's connection with the University during his Divinity course. Another Thomas Carlyle, indeed, is found in the matriculation lists and in the Arts classes, just after *our* Carlyle had left those classes; but he is a Thomas Carlyle from Galloway, and is probably the person to whom Carlyle refers angrily as his troublesome *double-goer*, about whom and himself mistakes were constantly occurring, from this early period in the lives of both, on even to the time when this Thomas Carlyle was an "Angel" in the Irvingite Church and an author of books, and took the precaution of distinguishing himself always on his title-pages as "Thomas Carlyle, *Advocate*." It is in the special Divinity Hall Registers that we should look now for *our* Carlyle. Unfortunately, these Registers are defective. I have not found a list of the Divinity Hall students for 1813-14, though I believe it must have been in that session that Carlyle

entered himself in the books of Dr. William Ritchie, the chief Divinity Professor, as going on nominally in the Divinity course, if not attending lectures. The only sessions in which I do find his name registered are those of 1814-15 and 1817-18, both times as "Thomas Carlyle, Hoddam," and both times as one of 183 students then attending the Divinity Hall. Whether this means that his attendance in those two sessions amounted to something more real than in those in which his name is not found, I cannot determine, though I should like to be able to do so. It would be a pleasure to me to know to what real extent Carlyle attended the lectures of Dr. Ritchie in Divinity and of Dr. Hugh Meiklejohn in Church History; and it would be a greater pleasure to me to know whether he ever sat in the Hebrew class-room and was called up by Dr. Alexander Brunton to read a bit from the Hebrew Bible. For I had the fortune to be a disciple of this "Rabbi Brunton" myself in the same Hebrew class a great many years afterwards, when he was a very old gentleman, a wonder of antique clerical neatness in his dress, and with a great bald head, and large, pink, bland face, which it did one good to look at. That was all the good you got, however; for, though he professed to teach Hebrew in two sessions, with the elements of Chaldee and Syriac, and, I think, Arabic in addition, the amount of linguistic instruction he gave, or was capable of giving, was as if you had boiled ten chapters of the Hebrew Bible in the same kettle with three or four leaves of Hebrew and Chaldee grammar, and drunk the concoction in a series of doses. Carlyle on Rabbi Brunton's benches would have been a picture for my fancy worth a thousand; and I wish now I

had asked him whether he *did* attend the Hebrew class. Once I spoke to him of Brunton's predecessor in the Hebrew chair, Dr. Alexander Murray, a real linguist, and one of the finest minds of his time in Scotland, as any one may see who will read his letters published in that most delightful of recent books of literary anecdote, *Archibald Constable and his Literary Correspondents*, edited by the late Thomas Constable. This fine scholar and thinker had died in 1813, after having held the Hebrew chair only one year; and Brunton, who had been a rival candidate with him, had stepped into his place. That had been in the last year of Carlyle's Arts course, and he retained no more than a vague recollection of Murray's figure as seen about the College.

What makes it all the likelier that Carlyle did begin his Divinity course in 1813-14, and did give some attendance in the Divinity Hall that session, is that he informs us in his *Reminiscences* that he was in Edinburgh in May 1814, and was among the audience in the General Assembly of the Kirk for that year, when he heard Jeffrey plead, and Drs. Hill and Inglis, and also Dr. Chalmers, speak. The annual meeting of the General Assembly in May was then, as it is now, a great affair; and it would have been the most natural thing in the world for a young student of Divinity, fresh from his first session at the Hall, to be in the gallery of the Assembly, to see the physiognomies of the leaders, Moderate or Evangelical, and to hear the debates. If he *had* resided in Edinburgh through the preceding session, the probability is that he had teaching engagements which helped to pay his expenses. We do not, however, hear definitely of any such teaching employ-

ment in Edinburgh in 1813-14, but only that, later in 1814, he applied for the vacant mathematical mastership in his own school of Annan, won the post by competition in Dumfries, and settled in Annan to perform the duties.

The Annan mathematical mastership lasted about two years, or from the autumn of 1814 to the autumn of 1816, bringing Carlyle from his nineteenth year to his twenty-first. His receipts were between £60 and £70 a year; and he boarded in the house of Mr. Glen, the Burgher minister of Annan, where he read prodigiously at nights in all sorts of books, latterly sitting up till three in the morning over Newton's *Principia*. But, though the Glens were pleasant, kind people, and he was not far from his father's house, and had two or three good friends in the neighbourhood,—one of them the Rev. Henry Duncan of Ruthwell, a man of many accomplishments, and the real founder of Savings Banks,—he found himself, on the whole, "lonesome, uncomfortable, and out of place." His character among the Annan people was that of "morose dissociableness," and he detested his school-work.

The two visits which he paid to Edinburgh in the course of the two years were bright interruptions in his dull routine. The first was about the Christmas of 1814, only a few months after he had gone to Annan. His purpose was to read the first of his trial-discourses in the Divinity Hall,—that being, as we have supposed, his second session in Divinity, and one of the two sessions in which, as we have seen, his name occurs in the Divinity Hall lists. The discourse was an English sermon on the text (Psalm cxix. 67): "*Before I was afflicted I went*

"*astray; but now have I kept Thy Word.*" It was, he says, "a very weak, flowery, and sentimental piece," —which we may believe if we like. The second visit was in the Christmas-time of 1815, for the delivery of his second discourse, a Latin exegesis on the question, "*Num detur Religio Naturalis?*" ("Is a Natural Religion possible?") This too, he supposes, was "weak enough," though the writing of the Latin had given him some satisfaction, and there had been some momentary pleasure in "the bits of compliments and flimsy approbation from comrades and professors" which greeted this performance, as indeed had been the case with the previous year's sermon. But this visit of the Christmas of 1815 was memorable to him for something more than the delivery of his exegesis. That trouble off his mind, he was taking a holiday week, and looking up old Edinburgh acquaintances; and it was one night, when he was in Rose Street, sitting rather silently in the rooms of a certain Waugh, a distant cousin of his own, and his predecessor in the Annan mastership, that the door opened, and there stepped in Edward Irving, accompanied by an Edinburgh mathematical teacher named Nichol. Carlyle had once seen Irving casually long before in the Annan schoolroom, when Irving called there as a former boy of the school, home from the University with prizes and honours; he had heard much of Irving since,—especially of his continued University triumphs and his brilliant success in schoolmastering, first in the new academy he had set up in Haddington, and more recently in a similar academy at Kirkcaldy; but this was their first real meeting. It was, as Carlyle tells us, by no means promising. Irving, in a somewhat grandiose way, asked Carlyle this and

that about what was going on in Annan. Carlyle, irritated a little by his air of superiority, answered more and more succinctly, till at last to such questions as "Has Mrs. —— got a baby? Is it a son or daughter?" his answers were merely that he did not know. "You seem to know nothing," said Irving, after one or two rebuffs of the kind. "To which," says Carlyle, "I, with prompt emphasis, somewhat "provoked, replied, 'Sir, by what right do you try "my knowledge in this way? Are you the grand "inquisitor, or have you authority to question "people and cross-question at discretion? I have had "no interest to inform myself about the births in "Annan, and care not if the process of birth and "generation there should cease and determine al-"together.'" There might be worse subjects for a painter than this first meeting between Irving and Carlyle. The very room in Rose Street, I suppose, still exists, and there would be little difficulty in imagining the group. On one side, staggering from the blow he has just received, we see the Herculean Irving, three-and-twenty years of age, with coal-black hair, and handsome and jovial visage, despite his glaring squint; seated on the other side we see the thinner and more bilious figure of the stripling Carlyle, just after he has delivered the blow; and Waugh and Nichol stand between, looking on and laughing.[1]

[1] This is not the first passage at arms on record between a Carlyle and an Irving. As far back as the sixteenth century, when Irvings and Carlyles were even more numerous in the West Border than they are at present, and are heard of, with Maxwells, Bells, Johnstons, and other clans, as keeping those parts in continual turmoil with their feuds, raids, and depredations, it would happen sometimes that a Carlyle jostled with an Irving. Thus, in the Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, under date Aug. 28, 1578, we have the statement from an Alexander Carlyle that there had been a controversy "betwix

The next meeting of Carlyle and Irving was in Annan about six months afterwards. In the interval the Kirkcaldy people, many of whom were dissatisfied with Irving's conduct in the new academy there, and especially with the severity of his discipline among the young ones, had resolved on resuscitating their regular or Burgh School; and, on the recommendation of Professors Leslie and Christison, Carlyle had been offered the mastership of that school. If Carlyle accepted and went to Kirkcaldy, it would thus be as Irving's rival. The meeting, therefore, might have been awkward but for Irving's magnanimity. He invited Carlyle cordially to be his guest in the preliminary visit he meditated to Kirkcaldy for the purpose of inquiry; said that his books were at Carlyle's service, that two Annandale men must not be strangers in Fifeshire, etc. Accordingly, when Carlyle did accept the appointment, and transfer himself from Annan to Kirkcaldy in the autumn of 1816, the two became inseparable. They were the David and Jonathan of Kirkcaldy town; and one of the pleasantest parts of Carlyle's *Reminiscences* is his description of those Kirkcaldy days, from 1816 to the end of 1818, when

him and Johnne Irvin, callit the Windie Duke." What the controversy was does not appear; but both parties had been apprehended by Lord Maxwell, then Warden of the West Marches, and lodged in the "pledge-chalmer," or prison, of Dumfries; and Carlyle's complaint is that, while the said John Irving had been released on bail, no such favour has been shown to *him*, but he has been kept in irons for twenty-two weeks. This Alexander Carlyle seems to be the same person as a "Red Alexander Carlyle of Eglisfechan" heard of afterwards in the same Record, under date Feb. 22, 1581-2, as concerned in "some attemptatis and slauchter" committed in the West March, and of which the Privy Council were taking cognisance. On this occasion he is not in controversy with an Irving, but has "Edward Irving of Boneschaw," and his son "Christie Irving of the Coif," among his fellow-culprits. Notices of the Dumfriesshire Carlyles and Irvings, separately or in company, are frequent in the Register through the reign of James VI.

he and Irving were constantly together, walking on the Kirkcaldy sands, or making Saturday excursions to Fifeshire places round about, or boating expeditions on the Firth, or longer rambles in holiday time to the Lochlomond country and the West, or to their native Dumfriesshire by Moffat and the Yarrow. Irving was by this time a licensed preacher in the Scottish Church; and Carlyle attended him in his occasional preachings in Kirkcaldy or the neighbourhood, or accompanied him to hear other preachers,—once, for example, to Dunfermline to hear Dr. Chalmers. This was the time too of some memorable incidents of more private mark in the lives of the two young men. It was the time of Irving's intimacy with the Martins of Kirkcaldy Manse, and of his engagement to a daughter of that family, though his heart was with the Jane Welsh who had been his pupil at Haddington; and it was also the time of Carlyle's frustrated first love,—the object of which was a Margaret Gordon, an orphan girl, then residing in Kirkcaldy with her widowed Aberdeenshire aunt. Though it is with the Edinburgh connections of Carlyle during his two years at Kirkcaldy that we are concerned here, I cannot refrain from this episode of his acquaintance with Margaret Gordon.

This girl, interesting long ago to all inquirers into Carlyle's biography as the nameless original of the "Blumine" of his *Sartor Resartus*, has become even more interesting since the revelation of her name and the description of her by Carlyle himself in his *Reminiscences*. Even this description, however, falls far short of the impression made by that fragment of her own farewell letter to Carlyle which Mr. Froude published in his *Nineteenth Century* article on Carlyle's

Early Life. Nothing finer than that letter has come to light, or ever can come to light, in all Carlyle's correspondence :—

"And now, my dear friend, a long, long adieu! One advice; and, as a parting one, consider, value it. Cultivate the milder dispositions of your heart. Subdue the more extravagant visions of the brain. In time your abilities must be known. Among your acquaintance they are already beheld with wonder and delight. By those whose opinion will be valuable they hereafter will be appreciated. Genius will render you great. May virtue render you beloved! Remove the awful distance between you and ordinary men by kind and gentle manners. Deal gently with their inferiority, and be convinced they will respect you as much, and like you more. Why conceal the real goodness that flows in your heart? . . . Again adieu! Pardon the freedom I have used; and, when you think of me, be it as of a kind sister, to whom your happiness will always yield delight, and your griefs sorrow. . . . I give you not my address, because I dare not promise to see you."

Valuable as an additional attestation of the enormous impression made by Carlyle upon all who came near him even at this early date, and of the prodigious expectations entertained of his future career, these words reveal also such a character in the writer herself as almost to compel speculation as to what might have happened if she had become his wife. That there was real affection on both sides is evident. The obstacle was partly in circumstances. In the opinion of her aunt and guardian, and of others, Margaret Gordon, who, though the daughter of a poor colonial, and left with little or nothing, was one of the aristocratic family of the Aberdeenshire Gordons, could hardly marry a Kirkcaldy schoolmaster. But perhaps some dread on her own part, arising from those perceptions of the harder side of his character which she communicated to himself so tenderly and frankly, may have aided in the separation. Her subsequent history could be told

in some detail by persons still living. She became the wife of Alexander Bannerman of Aberdeen, a man of note in the commerce of that city, and of a family of old standing and landed estates in the shire. There were traditions of him in his youth as "Sandy Bannerman," one of the wild Maule of Panmure and Duke of Gordon set, who filled the north with their pranks; but my own recollection of him in his more mature days is of the staid and highly respectable Alexander Bannerman, latterly Sir Alexander Bannerman, who was long the Whig M.P. for Aberdeen, and in that capacity was very attentive to the interests of the city, and very kind to old pensioners and the like who had any grievances or claims on the Government. The Whigs promoted him at last to a colonial governorship; and I think he died in that post. I might have seen Carlyle's "Blumine" myself when she was Lady Bannerman, if only when she drove through the streets of Aberdeen to grace one of her husband's elections; but I have no recollection that I ever did.

To my surprise, Carlyle did not seem indisposed to talk of the "Blumine" episode in his life at Kirkcaldy. He used to make inquiries about the Aberdeenshire Bannermans; and he once sketched the whole story to me, in a shadowy way and without naming names (though I then knew them for myself), but dwelling on various particulars, and especially on those casual meetings with his first love in her married state which he has described in his *Reminiscences*. Though he talked prettily and tenderly on the subject, the impression left was that the whole thing had become "objective" to him, a mere dream of the past. But fifty years had then elapsed since those Kirkcaldy days when Margaret Gordon and he were first together.

Among Carlyle's Edinburgh connections in the Kirkcaldy days, one comes to us in a book form. It was in 1817 that Professor Leslie, not yet Sir John Leslie, brought out the third edition of his *Elements of Geometry and Plane Trigonometry*, being an improvement and enlargement of the two previous editions of 1809 and 1811. The geometrical portion of the volume consists of six books, intended to supersede the traditional six books of Euclid, and containing many propositions not to be found there. The seventeenth proposition of the sixth book is the problem "*To divide a straight line, whether internally or externally, so that the rectangle under its segments shall be equivalent to a given rectangle.*" The solution, with diagrams, occupies a page; and there is an additional page of "scholium," pointing out in what circumstances the problem is impossible, and calling attention to the value of the proposition in the construction of quadratic equations. So much for the text of the proposition at pp. 176-177; but, when we turn to the "Notes and Illustrations" appended to the volume, we find, at p. 340, this note by Leslie:—

> "The solution of this important problem now inserted in the text was suggested to me by Mr. Thomas Carlyle, an ingenious young mathematician, formerly my pupil. But I here subjoin likewise the original construction given by Pappus; which, though rather more complex, has yet some peculiar advantages."

Leslie then proceeds to give the solution of Pappus, in about two pages, and to add about three pages of further remarks on the application of the problem to the construction of quadratics. The mention of Carlyle by Leslie in this volume of 1817 is, I believe, the first mention of Carlyle by name in print; and it was no small compliment to prefer, for text purposes, young Carlyle's

solution of an important problem to the old one that had come down from the famous Greek geometrician. Evidently Carlyle's mathematical reputation was still kept up about the Edinburgh University, and Leslie was anxious to do his favourite pupil a good turn.[1]

More personal were the connections with Edinburgh which Carlyle still kept up by visits from Kirkcaldy, either by himself or with Irving. As it was not much to cross the Firth on a Saturday or occasional holiday, such visits were pretty frequent. Carlyle notes them, and the meetings and little convivialities which he and Irving had in the course of them with nondescript and clerical Edinburgh acquaintances, chiefly Irving's, here and there in Edinburgh houses and lodgings. Nothing of consequence came of these convivialities, passed mostly, he says, in "gossip and more or less ingenious giggle," and serving only to make Irving and him feel that, though living in Kirkcaldy, they had the brighter Edinburgh element close at hand. One Edinburgh visit of Carlyle's from Kirkcaldy deserves particular record:—"On one of these visits," he says, "my last feeble tatter of connection with Divinity "Hall affairs or clerical outlooks was allowed to snap "itself and fall definitely to the ground. Old Dr. "Ritchie 'not at home' when I called to enter myself. "'Good!' answered I; '*let the omen be fulfilled.*'" In other words, he never went back to Dr. Ritchie, and ceased to be a Divinity student. Such is the account in the *Reminiscences*, confirmed by a private note in Carlyle's hand, published in Mr. Froude's article:—"The theological course, which could be

[1] I have been informed, however, that Leslie must have misconceived Carlyle when he took the solution as absolutely Carlyle's own. It is to be found, I am told, in an old Scottish book of geometry.

"prosecuted or kept open by appearing annually, "putting down your name, but with some trifling fee, "in the register, and then going your way, was," he says, "after perhaps two years of this languid form, "allowed to close itself for good. I remember yet "being on the street in Argyll Square, Edinburgh, "probably in 1817, and come over from Kirkcaldy "with some intent, the languidest possible, still to put "down my name and fee. The official person, when "I rang, was not at home, and my instant feeling was, "'*Very good, then, very good; let this be finis in the* "'*matter.*' And it really was." This is precise enough, but perhaps with a slight mistake in the dating. The name, "Thomas Carlyle, Hoddam," as we have seen, does stand in the register of the Edinburgh Divinity Hall students for the session 1817-18, its only previous appearance in the preserved lists being in 1814-15, though it is likely he had begun his Divinity course in 1813-14. It must, therefore, have been after 1817 that he made the above-mentioned call on Dr. Ritchie in Argyll Square. The probability is that it was late in 1818, in anticipation of the coming session of 1818-19.

PART II.—1818-1822

From the year 1818, when Carlyle was two-and-twenty years of age, the Church of Scotland had lost the chance of seeing him among her clergy. In his *Reminiscences* he speaks of his dropping off as but the natural, and in a manner accidental, termination of the languid, half-willing, half-reluctant, state of mind in which he had himself always been on that subject of his clerical calling which his parents had

so much at heart. There can be little doubt, however, that stronger forces were at work.

In Kirkcaldy he had been reading omnivorously, not only laying Irving's library under contribution, but getting over books from the Edinburgh University library as well. Bailly's *Histoire de l'Astronomie* was one of those received from Edinburgh; and among those from Irving's library he mentions "Gibbon, Hume, etc.," besides a number of the French classics in the small Didot edition. He dwells on his reading of *Gibbon*, informing us that he read the book with "greedy velocity," getting through a volume a day, so as to finish the twelve volumes of which Irving's copy consisted in just as many days. He adds:—"It was, "of all the books, perhaps the most impressive on me "in my then stage of investigation and state of mind. "I by no means completely admired Gibbon, perhaps "not more than I do now; but his winged sarcasms, "so quiet and yet so conclusively transpiercing and "killing dead, were often admirably potent and "illuminative to me." In one of the most intimate conversations I ever had with Carlyle he spoke even more distinctly of this his first complete reading of Gibbon in Kirkcaldy. The conversation was in his back-garden in Chelsea, and the occasion was his having been reading Gibbon, or portions of him, again. After mentioning, rather pathetically, as he does in his *Reminiscences*, his wonder at the velocity of his reading in his early days as compared with the slow rate at which he could now get through a book, he spoke of Gibbon himself in some detail, and told me that it was from that first well-remembered reading of Gibbon in twelve days, at the rate of a volume a day, that he dated the extirpation from his mind of the

last remnant that had been left in it of the orthodox belief in miracles. This is literally what he said, and it is of consequence in our present connection. The process of extirpation can hardly have been complete at the moment of the call on Dr. Ritchie,—else the call would not have been made; but there can be no doubt that it was not mere continued languor that stopped Carlyle in his clerical career. There were the beginnings in his mind of the crash of that system of belief on which the Scottish Church rested, and some adherence to which was imperative on any one who would be a clergyman of that Church in any section of it then recognised or possible.

Although he kept that matter for the present to himself, not admitting even Irving yet to his confidence, the fact that he had given up the clerical career was known at once to all his friends.[1] It was a sore disappointment, above all, to his parents; but they left him to his own course, his father with admirable magnanimity, his mother "perhaps still more lovingly, though not so silently."

It was another disappointment to them, about the same time, to know that he had resolved to quit the Kirkcaldy schoolmastership. His relations with the Kirkcaldy people, or with some of them, had not been absolutely satisfactory, any more than Irving's; both had "got tired of schoolmastering and its mean con-

[1] A letter of Carlyle's among those contributed by Mr. Alexander Ireland to Mr. Conway's *Memoir* proves that the momentous reading of Gibbon was before Feb. 20, 1818; and in a subsequent letter in the same collection, of date "July 1818," he informs his correspondent, "I have quitted all thoughts of the Church, for many reasons, which it would be tedious, perhaps [word not legible], to enumerate." This piece of information is bedded, however, in some curious remarks on the difficulties of those "chosen souls" who take up opinions different from those of the age they live in, or of the persons with whom they associate. See the letter in Mr. Conway's volume, pp. 168-170.

tradictions and poor results," and had even come to the conclusion "Better die than be a schoolmaster for one's living"; and in the end of 1818 they had both thrown up their Kirkcaldy engagements and were back in Edinburgh to look about for something else. Irving, then twenty-six years of age and comparatively at ease in the matter of pecuniary means, had preachings here and there about Edinburgh to occupy him, and the possibility of a call to some parish-charge at home, or heroic mission abroad, for his prospect. Carlyle, just twenty-three years of age, was all at sea as to his future, but had about £90 of savings on which to rest till he could see light.

The six months or so from December 1818 to the summer of 1819 form a little period by itself in the Edinburgh lives of Irving and Carlyle. They lodged in the Old Town, not far from each other. Carlyle's rooms were at No. 15 Carnegie Street, in the suburb called "The Pleasance"; Irving's, which were the more expensive, were in Bristo Street, close to the University,—where, says Carlyle, he "used to give breakfasts to intellectualities he fell in with, I often a guest with them." Irving also renewed his connection with the University by attending Hope's Class of Chemistry, which was always in those days the most crowded of the classes by far, and the Natural History Class under Jameson. I find no proof of any similar attendance on any University Class by Carlyle through the session 1818-19; but we learn from Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Irving* that he was for this session a member of a certain *Philosophical Association* which Irving had started "for the mutual improvement of those who had already completed the ordinary academic course." It was one of those small and ephemeral societies of

which there have been so many in the history of the University, distinct from the larger and more famous societies,—such as the *Speculative*, the *Theological*, the *Dialectic*, and the *Diagnostic*,—which established themselves permanently, and still exist. We hear a little of Irving's doings in the semi-academic brotherhood, especially of an essay which he read to them; but of Carlyle's doings, if there were any, we hear nothing. The mere membership, however, was a kind of continued bond between him and his *Alma Mater* through that session; and we can imagine also some renewed intercourse with Professor Leslie, and an occasional dropping in, as an outsider, at one or other of the class-rooms, to hear a stray lecture. Meanwhile, he found no occupation. Irving, besides his preachings, had an hour or two a day of private mathematical teaching, at the rate of two guineas a month per hour; but nothing of the sort came to Carlyle. Once, indeed, recommended by Nichol, the mathematical schoolmaster of whom we have already heard, he did call on a gentleman who wanted mathematical coaching for some friend; but the result was that the gentleman,—whom he describes in the letter as "a stout, impudent-looking man with red whiskers,"—thought two guineas a month "perfectly extravagant," and would not engage him. In these circumstances, and as his weekly bills for his lodgings and board amounted to between 15s. and 17s.,—which he thought unreasonable for his paltry accommodations, with badly-cooked food, and perpetual disturbance from the noises of a school overhead,—he resolved to leave Edinburgh, for a time at least, and return to his father's farmhouse at Mainhill.

On the 29th of March 1819 he intimated this intention in a letter to his mother thus:—"A French

"author, d'Alembert (one of the few persons who "deserve the honourable epithet of honest man), "whom I was lately reading, remarks that one who "has devoted his life to learning ought to carry for "his motto '*Liberty, Truth, Poverty*,' for he who fears "the latter can never have the former. This should "not prevent one from using every honest effort to "attain to a comfortable situation in life; it says only "that the best is dearly bought by base conduct, and "the worst is not worth mourning over. We shall "speak of all these matters more fully in summer; for "I am meditating just now to come down to stay a "while with you, accompanied with a cargo of books, "Italian, German, and others. You will give me "yonder little room, and you will waken me every "morning about five or six o'clock. Then *such* study! "I shall delve in the garden too, and, in a word, "become not only the wisest, but the strongest, man "in those regions. This is all *claver*, but it pleases "one."[1]

It seems to have been about June 1819 that the migration from Edinburgh to Mainhill was carried into effect. It is thus mentioned in one of Irving's letters from Bristo Street to the Martins of Kirkcaldy:— "Carlyle goes away to-morrow, and Brown the next "day. So here I am once more on my own resources, "except Dickson, who is better fitted to swell the "enjoyment of a joyous than to cheer the solitude of a "lonely hour. For this Carlyle is better fitted than "any one I know. It is very odd indeed that he "should be sent for want of employment to the country. "Of course, like every man of talent, he has gathered

[1] Quoted in Mr. Froude's article, "The Early Life of Carlyle," in the *Nineteenth Century* for July 1881.

"around this Patmos many a splendid purpose to be "fulfilled, and much improvement to be wrought out. "'I have the ends of my thoughts to bring together, "'which no one can do in this thoughtless scene. I "'have my views of life to reform, and the whole plan "'of my conduct to new-model; and, into all, I have "'my health to recover. And then once more I shall "'venture my bark upon the waters of this wide realm; "'and, if she cannot weather it, I shall steer west, and "'try the waters of another world.' So he reasons "and resolves; but surely a worthier destiny awaits "him than voluntary exile."[1]

Within a few weeks after the writing of this letter, viz. on a late Sunday in July 1819, there occurred the incident which was to lead to Irving's own removal from Edinburgh, and affect the whole future course of his life. This was his appearance in the pulpit of St. George's church, by the friendly arrangement of Dr. Andrew Thomson, the minister of that church, in order that Dr. Chalmers, then on a visit to Edinburgh, and looking out for an assistant to himself in his great Glasgow church and parish of St. John's, might have a private opportunity of hearing Mr. Irving and judging of his fitness.

Let the autumn of 1819 be supposed to have passed, with Carlyle's studies and early risings in his father's house at Mainhill in Dumfriesshire,[2] and those

[1] Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Irving* (1862), i. 90, 91.

[2] My impression now is that it was this autumn of 1819 in his father's house that Carlyle had in his mind when he talked to me once of the remembered pleasures of certain early mornings in the Dumfriesshire hill-country. The chief was when, after a saunter out of doors among the sights and sounds of newly awakened nature, he would return to the fragrant tea that was ready for him at home. No cups of tea he had ever tasted in his life seemed so fragrant and so delicious as those his mother had ready for him after his walks in those old Dumfriesshire mornings.

negotiations between Irving and Dr. Chalmers which issued in the definite appointment of Irving to the Glasgow assistantship. It was in October 1819 that this matter was settled; and then Irving, who had been on a visit to his relatives in Annan, and was on his way thence to Glasgow, to enter on his new duties, picked up Carlyle at Mainhill, for that walk of theirs up the valley of the Dryfe, and that beating-up of their common friend, Frank Dickson, in his clerical quarters, which are so charmingly described in the *Reminiscences*.

Next month, November 1819, when Irving was forming acquaintance with Dr. Chalmers's congregation, and they hardly knew what to make of him,—some thinking him more like a "cavalry officer" or "brigand chief" than a young minister of the Gospel,—Carlyle was back in Edinburgh. His uncertainties and speculations as to his future, with the dream of emigration to America, had turned themselves into a vague notion that, if he gave himself to the study of law, he might possibly be able to muster somehow the two or three hundreds of pounds that would be necessary to make him a member of the Edinburgh Bar, and qualify him for walking up and down the floor of the Parliament House in wig and gown, like the grandees he had seen there in his memorable first visit to the place, with Tom Smail, ten years before. For that object residence in Edinburgh was essential, and so he had returned thither. His lodgings now seem to be no longer in Carnegie Street, but in Bristo Street,—possibly in the rooms which Irving had left.

No portion of the records relating to Carlyle's connection with our University has puzzled me more than that which refers to his law studies after he had

abandoned Divinity. From a memorandum of his own, quoted by Mr. Froude, but without date, it distinctly appears that he attended "Hume's Lectures on Scotch Law"; and Mr. Froude adds that his intention of becoming an advocate, and his consequent perseverance in attendance on the "law lectures" in the Edinburgh University, continued for some time. Our records, however, are not quite clear in the matter. In our Matriculation Book for the session 1819-20, where every law student, as well as every arts student and every medical student, was bound to enter his name, paying a matriculation-fee of 10s., I find two Thomas Carlyles, both from Dumfriesshire. One, whose signature, in a clear and elegant hand, I should take to be that of *our* Carlyle at that date, enters himself as "Thomas Carlyle, Dumfries," with the addition "5 Lit.," signifying that he had attended the Literary or Arts Classes in four preceding sessions. The matriculation number of this Thomas Carlyle is 825. The other, whose matriculation number is 1257, enters himself, in a somewhat boyish-looking hand, as "Thomas Carlyle, Dumfriesshire," with the addition "2 Lit.," signifying that he had attended one previous session in an Arts Class. Now, all depends on the construction of the appearances of those two Carlyles in the independent class-lists that have been preserved, in the handwritings of the Professors, for that session of their common matriculation and for subsequent sessions. Without troubling the reader with the puzzling details, I may say that the records present an alternative of two suppositions: viz. either (1) Both the Thomas Carlyles who matriculated for 1819-20 became law students that session; in which case the "Thomas Carlyle, Dumfriesshire," notwithstanding the

too boyish-looking handwriting, and the gross misdescription of him as "2 Lit.," was *our* Carlyle; or (2) Only one of the two became a law student; in which case he was the "Thomas Carlyle, Dumfries," or *our* Carlyle, using "Dumfries" as the name of his county, and correctly describing himself as "5 Lit." On the first supposition it has to be reported that Carlyle's sole attendance in a law class was in the Scots Law Class of Professor David Hume for the session 1819-20, while the other Carlyle was in the Civil Law Class for "the Institutes" that session, but reappeared in other classes in later sessions. On the second supposition (which also involves a mistake in the registration), Carlyle attended both the Scots Law Class and the "Institutes" department of the Civil Law Class in 1819-20, and so began a new career of attendance in the University, which extended to 1823 thus:—

Session 1819-20: Hume's Scots Law Class, and Professor Alexander Irving's Civil Law Class ("Institutes").

Session 1820-21: Irving's Civil Law Class ("Pandects"), and Hope's Chemistry Class (where the name in the Professor's list of his vast class of 460 students is spelt "Thomas Carlisle").

Session 1821-22: No attendance.

Session 1822-23: Scots Law Class a second time, under the new Professor, George Joseph Bell (Hume having just died).[1]

[1] But for the phrase "Hume's Lectures once done with, I flung the thing away for ever," quoted by Mr. Froude as from "a note somewhere," I should, on the evidence of handwriting, etc., have decided unhesitatingly for the second and more extensive of the two hypotheses. —The attendance on the Chemistry Class, which would become a fact if that hypothesis were correct, would be of some independent interest. With Carlyle's turn for science at that time, it was not unlikely. I may add that, from talks with him, I have an impression that, some time or other, he must have attended Professor Jameson's class of Natural History. He had certainly heard Jameson lecture pretty frequently; for he described Jameson's lecturing humorously and to the life, the favourite topic of his recollection being Jameson's discourse on the order *Glires* in the Linnæan Zoology. Though I have looked over the Matriculation

With this knowledge that Carlyle did for some time after 1819 contemplate the Law as a profession,—certain as to the main fact, though a little doubtful for the present in respect of the extent of time over which his law studies were continued,—let us proceed to his Edinburgh life in general for the five years from 1819 to 1824. He was not, indeed, wholly in Edinburgh during those five years. Besides absences now and then on brief visits, *e.g.* to Irving in Glasgow or elsewhere in the west, we are to remember his stated vacations, longer or shorter, in the summer and autumn, at his father's house at Mainhill in Annandale; and latterly there was a term of residence in country quarters of which there will have to be special mention at the proper date. In the main, however, from 1819 to 1824 Carlyle was an Edinburgh man. His lodgings were, first, in Bristo Street, but afterwards and more continuously at No. 3 Moray Street,—not, of course, the great Moray Place of the aristocratic West End, but a much obscurer namesake, now re-christened "Spey Street," at right angles to Pilrig Street, just off Leith Walk. It was in these lodgings that he read and mused; it was in the streets of Edinburgh, or on the heights on her skirts, that he had his daily walks; the few friends and acquaintances he had any converse with were in Edinburgh; and it was with Edinburgh and her affairs that as yet he considered his own future fortunes as all but certain to be bound up.

No more extraordinary youth ever walked the

Lists and also the preserved class-lists pretty carefully from 1809 to 1824, it is just possible that Carlyle's name in one of Jameson's class-lists within that range of time may have escaped me. The only other Professor, not already mentioned in the text, that I remember to have heard him talk of was Dr. Andrew Brown, Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres; but *him* he knew, I think, only by occasional dropping in at his lectures.

streets of Edinburgh, or of any other city, than the Carlyle of those years. Those great natural faculties, unmistakably of the order called *genius*, and that unusual wealth of acquirement, which had been recognised in him as early as 1814 by such intimate friends as Murray, and more lately almost with awe by Margaret Gordon, had been baulked of all fit outcome, but were still manifest to the discerning. When Irving speaks of them, or thinks of them, it is with a kind of amazement. At the same time that strange moodiness of character, that lofty pride and intolerance, that roughness and unsociableness of temper, against which Margaret Gordon and others had warned him as obstructing his success, had hardened themselves into settled habit. So it appeared; but in reality the word "habit" is misleading. Carlyle's moroseness, if we let that poor word pass in the meantime for a state of temper which it would take many words, and some of them much softer and grander, to describe adequately, was an innate and constitutional distinction. It is worth while to dwell for a moment on the contrast between him in this respect and the man who was his immediate predecessor in the series of really great literary Scotsmen. If there ever was a soul of sunshine and cheerfulness, of universal blandness and good fellowship, it was that with which Walter Scott came into the world. When Carlyle was born, twenty-four years afterwards, it was as if the Genius of Literature in Scotland, knowing that vein to have been amply provided for, and abhorring duplicates, had tried almost the opposite variety, and sent into the world a soul no less richly endowed, and stronger in the speculative part, but whose cardinal peculiarity should be despondency, discontentedness, and sense of pain. From his

childhood upwards, Carlyle had been, as his own mother said of him, "gey ill to deal wi'" ("considerably difficult to deal with"), the prey of melancholia, an incarnation of wailing and bitter broodings, addicted to the black and dismal view of things. With all his studies, all the development of his great intellect, all his strength in humour and in the wit and insight which a lively sense of the ludicrous confers, he had not outgrown this stubborn gloominess of character, but had brought it into those comparatively mature years of his Edinburgh life with which we are now concerned. His despondency, indeed, seems then to have been at its very worst. A few authentications may be quoted :—

April, 1819.—"As to my own projects, I am sorry, on several accounts, that I can give no satisfactory account to your friendly inquiries. A good portion of my life is already mingled with the past eternity; and, for the future, it is a dim scene, on which my eyes are fixed as calmly and intensely as possible,—to no purpose. The probability of my doing any service in my day and generation is certainly not very strong."[1]

March, 1820.—"I am altogether an —— creature. Timid, yet not humble, weak, yet enthusiastic, nature and education have rendered me entirely unfit to force my way among the thick-skinned inhabitants of this planet. Law, I fear, must be given up: it is a shapeless mass of absurdity and chicane."[2]

October, 1820.—"No settled purpose will direct my conduct, and the next scene of this fever-dream is likely to be as painful as the last. Expect no account of my prospects, for I have no prospects that are worth the name. I am like a being thrown from another planet on this terrestrial ball, an alien, a pilgrim among its possessors; I have no share in their pursuits; and life is to me a pathless, a waste and howling, wilderness,—surface barrenness, its verge enveloped under dark-brown shade."[3]

March 9, 1821.—"Edinburgh, with all its drawbacks, is the only scene for me. In the country I am like an alien, a stranger and pilgrim from a far-distant land. I must endeavour most sternly, for this state of things cannot last; and, if health do but

[1] Carlyle to a correspondent, in one of Mr. Ireland's copies of letters: *Conway*, p. 178.
[2] Ditto, *ibid.* p. 180.
[3] Ditto, *ibid.* pp. 201, 202.

revisit me, as I know she will, it shall ere long give place to a better. If I grow seriously ill, indeed, it will be different; but, when once the weather is settled and dry, exercise and care will restore me completely. I am considerably clearer than I was, and I should have been still more so had not this afternoon been wet, and so prevented me from breathing the air of Arthur Seat, a mountain close beside us, where the atmosphere is pure as a diamond, and the prospect grander than any you ever saw,—the blue, majestic, everlasting ocean, with the Fife hills swelling gradually into the Grampians behind; rough crags and precipices at our feet, where not a hillock rears its head unsung; with Edinburgh at their base, clustering proudly over her rugged foundations, and covering with a vapoury mantle the jagged, black, venerable masses of stonework that stretch far and wide, and show like a city of Fairyland. . . . I saw it all last evening when the sun was going down, and the moon's fine crescent, like a pretty silver creature as it is, was riding quietly above me."[1]

Reminiscence in 1867.—"Hope hardly dwelt in me . . .; only fierce resolution in abundance to do my best and utmost in all honest ways, and to suffer as silently and stoically as might be, if it proved (as too likely!) that I could do *nothing*. This kind of humour, what I sometimes called of "desperate hope," has largely attended me all my life. In short, as has been indicated elsewhere, I was advancing towards huge instalments of bodily and spiritual wretchedness in this my Edinburgh purgatory, and had to clean and purify myself in penal fire of various kinds for several years coming, the first and much the worst two or three of which were to be enacted in this once-loved city. Horrible to think of in part even yet!"[2]

What was the cause of such habitual wretchedness, such lowness of spirits, in a young man between his five-and-twentieth and his seven-and-twentieth year? In many external respects his life hitherto had been even unusually fortunate. His parentage was one of which he could be proud, and not ashamed; he had a kindly home to return to; he had never once felt, or had occasion to feel, the pinch of actual poverty, in any sense answering to the name or notion of poverty as it was understood by his humbler countrymen. He

[1] Carlyle to his brother John, quoted in Mr. Froude's Article.
[2] *Reminiscences*, ii. 16, 11.

had been in honourable employments, which many of his compeers in age would have been glad to get; and he had about £100 of saved money in his pocket,—a sum larger than the majority of the educated young Scotsmen about him could then finger, or perhaps ever fingered afterwards in all their lives. All this has to be distinctly remembered; for the English interpretations of Carlyle's early "poverty," "hardships," etc., are sheer nonsense. By the Scottish standard of his time, by the standard of say two-thirds of those who had been his fellows in the Divinity Hall of Edinburgh, Carlyle's circumstances so far had been even enviable. The cause of his abnormal unhappiness was to be found in *himself*. Was it, then, his ill-health,—that fearful "dyspepsia" which had come upon him in his twenty-third year, or just after his transit from Kirkcaldy to Edinburgh, and which clung to him, as we know, to the very end of his days? There can be no doubt that this was a most important factor in the case. His dyspepsia must have intensified his gloom, and may have accounted for those occasional excesses of his low spirits which verged on hypochondria. But, essentially, the gloom was there already, brought along with him from those days, before his twenty-third year, when, as he told the blind American clergyman Milburn, he was still "the healthy and hardy son of a hardy and healthy Scottish dalesman," and had not yet become "conscious of the ownership of that diabolical arrangement called a stomach."[1] In fact, as Luther maintained when he denounced the Roman Catholic commentators as gross and carnal fellows for their persistently physical interpretation of Paul's "thorn in the

[1] Quoted at p. 57 of Mr. William Howie Wylie's excellent volume entitled *Carlyle: The Man and His Books.*

flesh," as if there could be no severe enough "thorn" of a spiritual kind, the mere pathological explanations which physicians are apt to trust to will not suffice in such instances. What, then, of those spiritual distresses, arising from a snapping of the traditional and paternal creed, and a soul left thus rudderless for the moment, which Luther recognised as the most terrible, and had experienced in such measure himself?

That there must have been distress to Carlyle in his wrench of himself away from the popular religious faith, the faith of his father and mother, needs no argument. The main evidence, however, is that his clear intellect had cut down like a knife between him and the theology from which he had parted, leaving no ragged ends. The main evidence is that, though he had some central core of faith still to seek as a substitute,—though he was still agitating in his mind in a new way the old question of his Divinity Hall exegesis, *Num detur Religio Naturalis?*, and had not yet attained to that light, describable as a fervid, though scrupulously unfeatured, Theism or Supernaturalism, in the blaze of which he was to live all his after-life,—yet he was not involved in the coil of those ordinary "doubts" and "backward hesitations" of which we hear so much, and sometimes so cantingly, in feebler biographies. There is, at all events, no record in his case of any such efforts as those of Coleridge to rest in a theosophic refabrication out of the wrecks of the forsaken orthodoxy. On the contrary, whatever of more positive illumination, whatever of moral or really religious rousing, had yet to come, he appears to have settled once for all into a very definite condition of mind as to the limits of the intrinsically

possible or impossible for the human intellect in that class of considerations.

Yet another cause of despondency and low spirits, however, may suggest itself as feasible. No more in Carlyle than in any other ardent and imaginative young man at his age was there a deficiency of those love-languors and love-dreamings which are the secrets of many a masculine sadness. There are traces of them in his letters; and we may well believe that in his Edinburgh solitude he was pursued for a while by the pangs of "love disprized" in the image of his lost Margaret Gordon.

Add this cause to all the others, however, and let them all have their due weight and proportion, and it still remains true that the main and all-comprehending form of Carlyle's grief and dejection in those Edinburgh days was that of a great sword in too narrow a scabbard, a noble bird fretting in its cage, a soul of strong energies and ambitions measuring itself against common souls and against social obstructions, and all but frantic for lack of employment. Schoolmastering he had given up with detestation; the Church he had given up with indifference; the Law had begun to disgust him, or was seeming problematical. Where others could have rested, happy in routine, or at least acquiescent, Carlyle could not. What was this Edinburgh, for example, in the midst of which he was living, the solitary tenant of a poor lodging, not even on speaking terms with those that were considered her magnates, the very best of whom he was conscious of the power to equal, and, if necessary, to vanquish and lay flat? We almost see on his face some such defiant glare round Edinburgh, as if, whatever else were to come, it was this innocent and unheeding Edinburgh

that he would first of all take by the throat and compel to listen.

Authentication may be again necessary, and may bring some elucidation with it. "The desire which, "in common with all men, I feel for conversation "and social intercourse is, I find," he had written to a correspondent in November 1818, "enveloped in "a dense, repulsive atmosphere, not of vulgar *mauvaise* "*honte*, though such it is generally esteemed, but "of deeper feelings, which I partly inherit from "nature, and which are mostly due to the undefined "station I have hitherto occupied in society."[1] Again, to a correspondent in March 1820, "The fate of one "man is a mighty small concern in the grand whole "in this best of all possible worlds. Let us quit the "subject,—with just one observation more, which I "throw out for your benefit, should you ever come "to need such an advice. It is to keep the profession "you have adopted, if it be at all tolerable. A young "man who goes forth into the world to seek his "fortune with those lofty ideas of honour and up-"rightness which a studious secluded life naturally "begets, will in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, "if friends and other aids are wanting, fall into the "sere, the yellow leaf."[2] These feelings were known to all his friends, so that Carlyle's despondency over his poor social prospects, his enormous power of complaint, or, as the Scots call it, "of pityin' himsel'," was as familiar a topic with them as with his own family.

No one sympathised with him more, or wrote more encouragingly to him than Irving from Glasgow;

[1] Mr. Ireland's copies of Letters, in *Conway*, p. 171.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 180.

and it is from some of Irving's letters that we gather the information that certain peculiarities in Carlyle's own demeanour were understood to be operating against his popularity even within the limited Edinburgh circle in which he did for the present move. "Known you must be before you can be employed," Irving writes to him in December 1819. "Known "you will not be," he proceeds, "for a winning, "attaching, accommodating man, but for an original, "commanding, and rather self-willed man. . . . Your "utterance is not the most favourable. It convinces, "but does not persuade; and it is only a very few (I "can claim place for myself) that it fascinates. Your "audience is worse. They are, generally (I exclude "myself), unphilosophical, unthinking drivellers, who "lie in wait to catch you in your words, and who "give you little justice in the recital, because you "give their vanity or self-esteem little justice, or even "mercy, in the encounter. Therefore, my dear friend, "*some other way is to be sought for.*"[1] In a letter in March 1820 Irving returns to the subject. "There- "fore it is, my dear Carlyle," he says, "that I exhort "you to call in the finer parts of your mind, and to "try to present the society about you with those more "ordinary displays which they can enjoy. The in- "difference with which they receive them [your present "extraordinary displays], and the ignorance with which "they treat them, operate on the mind like gall and "wormwood. I would entreat you to be comforted "in the possession of your treasures, and to study "more the times and persons to which you bring "them forth. When I say your treasures, I mean "not your information so much, which they will bear

[1] Quoted in Mr. Froude's Article.

"the display of for the reward and value of it, but "your feelings and affections; which, being of finer "tone than theirs, and consequently seeking a keener "expression, they are apt to mistake for a rebuke of "their own tameness, or for intolerance of ordinary "things, and too many of them, I fear, for asperity "of mind."[1] This is Margaret Gordon's advice over again; and it enables us to add to our conception of Carlyle in those days of his Edinburgh struggling and obstruction the fact of his fearlessness and aggressiveness in speech, his habit even then of that lightning rhetoric, that boundless word-audacity, with sarcasms and stinging contempts falling mercilessly upon his auditors themselves, which characterised his conversation to the last. This habit, or some of the forms of it, he had derived, he thought, from his father.[2]

[1] Quoted *ibid.*

[2] The best account I ever had of Carlyle's father was from an intelligent elderly gentleman who, having retired from business, amused himself one session, somewhere about or after 1857, by attending my class of English Literature in University College, London. He was from Dumfriesshire originally, and had known all the Carlyle family. He spoke more of Carlyle's father than of Carlyle himself; and his first words to me about him were these:—"He was a most extraordinary man, Carlyle's father: he said a thing, and it ran through the country."——Carlyle often talked to me of his father, and always in the tone of the memoir in his *Reminiscences*, though I did not then know that he had any such memoir in writing. "He was a far cleverer man, my father, than I am or ever shall be," was one of his phrases. He dwelt on what he thought a peculiar use by his father of the Scottish word *gar*, meaning "to compel," as when he was reluctant to do a thing that must be done, and ended by saying he must "just *gar* himsel' do it." The expression was not new to me, for it is to be heard farther north than Annandale; but it seemed characteristic.—Of the strong and picturesque rhetoric of Carlyle's father I remember two examples, told me, I think, by Mrs. Carlyle. Once, when he was going somewhere in a cart with his daughters on a rainy day, he was annoyed by the drip-dripping into his neck from the whalebone point of one of the umbrellas. "I would rather sit a' nicht in my sark," he said, "under a waterspout on the tap of ——" [some mountain in the neighbourhood, the name of which I forget].

Private mathematical teaching was still for a while Carlyle's most immediate resource. We hear of two or three engagements of the kind at his fixed rate of two guineas per month for an hour a day, and also of one or two rejected proposals of resident tutorship away from Edinburgh. Nor had he given up his own prosecution of the higher mathematics. My recollection is that he used to connect the break-down of his health with his continued wrestlings with Newton's *Principia* even after he had left Kirkcaldy for Edinburgh; and he would speak of the grassy slopes of the Castle Hill, then not railed off from Princes Street, as a place where he liked to lie in fine weather, poring over that or other books. His readings, however, were now, as before, very miscellaneous. The Advocates' Library, to which he had access, I suppose, through some lawyer of his acquaintance, afforded him facilities in the way of books such as he had never before enjoyed. "Lasting thanks to *it*, alone of Scottish institutions," is his memorable phrase of obligation to this Library; and of his appetite for reading and study generally we may judge from a passage in one of his earlier letters, where he says, "When I am assaulted by those "feelings of discontent and ferocity which solitude "at all times tends to produce, and by that host of "miserable little passions which are ever and anon "attempting to disturb one's repose, there is no "method of defeating them so effectual as to take "them in flank by a zealous course of study."

Once, when his son, of whom he had become proud, was at home in a vacation, and a pious old neighbour-woman who had come in was exciting herself in a theological controversy with the Divinity student on some point or other, he broke out, "Thou auld crack-brained enthusiastic, dost thou think to argue wi' our Tom?"

One zealous course of study to which he had set himself just after settling in Edinburgh from Kirkcaldy, if not a little before, was the study of the German language. French, so far as the power of reading it was concerned, he had acquired sufficiently in his boyhood; Italian, to some less extent, had come easily enough; but German tasked his perseverance and required time. He was especially diligent in it through the years 1819 and 1820, with such a measure of success that in August in the latter year he could write to one friend, "I could tell you much about the new Heaven and new Earth which a slight study of German literature has revealed to me," and in October of the same year to another, "I have lived riotously with Schiller, Goethe, and the rest: they are the greatest men at present with me." His German readings were continued, and his admiration of the German Literature grew.

Was it not time that Carlyle should be doing something in Literature himself? Was not Literature obviously his true vocation,—the very vocation for which his early companions, such as Murray, had discerned his pre-eminent fitness as long ago as 1814, and to which the failure of his successive experiments in established professions had ever since been pointing? To this, in fact, Irving had been most importunately urging him in those letters, just quoted, in which, after telling him that, by reason of the asperity and irritating contemptuousness of his manner, he would never be rightly appreciated by his usual appearances in society, or even by his splendid powers of talk, he had summed up his advice in the words "*Some other way is to be sought for.*" What Irving meant, and urged at some length, and with

great practicality, in those letters, was that Carlyle should at once think of some literary attempts, congenial to his own tastes, and yet of as popular a kind as possible, and aim at a connection with the *Edinburgh Review* and *Blackwood.*

Carlyle himself, as we learn, had been already, for a good while, turning his thoughts now and then in the same direction. It is utterly impossible that a young man who for five years already had been writing letters to his friends the English style of which moved them to astonishment, as it still moves to admiration those who now read the specimens of them that have been recovered, should not have been exercising his literary powers privately in other things than letters, and so have had beside him, before 1819, a little stock of pieces suitable for any magazine that would take them. One such piece, he tells us, had been sent over from Kirkcaldy in 1817 to the editor of some magazine in Edinburgh. It was a piece of "the descriptive tourist kind," giving some account of Carlyle's first impressions of the Yarrow country, so famous in Scottish song and legend, as visited by him in one of his journeys from Edinburgh to Annandale. What became of it he never knew, the editor having returned no answer.[1] Although, after this rebuff, there was no

[1] The substance of the paper must have been retained in Carlyle's memory, for he described to me once with extraordinary vividness his first sight of the Vale of Yarrow as he struck it in one of his walks to Annandale. It was a beautiful day, and he had come upon a height looking down upon the stony stream and its classic valley. As he stood and gazed, with something in his mind of Wordsworth's salutation, "And this is Yarrow!", up from the valley there came a peculiar, repeated, rhythmical sound, as of *clink—clink—clink*, for which he could not account. All was solitary and quiet otherwise, but still the *clink—clink—clink* rose to his ear. At last, some way off, he saw a man with a cart standing in the bed of the stream, and lifting stone after stone from it, which he threw into the cart. He could then watch

new attempt at publication from Kirkcaldy, there can be little doubt that he had then a few other things by him, and not in prose only, with which he could have repeated the trial. It is very possible that several specimens of those earliest attempts of his in prose and verse, published by himself afterwards when periodicals were open to him, remain yet to be disinterred from their hiding-places; but two have come to light. One is a story of Annandale incidents published anonymously in Fraser's Magazine for January 1831, under the title "*Cruthers and Jonson, or the Outskirts of Life: a True Story*," but certified by Mr. William Allingham, no doubt on Carlyle's own information, to have been the very first of all his writings intended for the press.[1] The other is of more interest to us here, from its picturesque oddity in connection with Carlyle's early Edinburgh life. It is entitled "*Peter Nimmo*," and was published in Fraser's Magazine for February 1831, the next number after that containing *Cruthers and Jonson*.

Within my own memory, and in fact to as late as 1846, there was known about the precincts of Edinburgh University a singular being called PETER NIMMO, or, by tradition of some jest played upon him,

the gesture of each cast of a stone in among the rest, and note the interval before the *clink* reached him.—The Yarrow songs were familiar to Carlyle; and among the many scraps of old verse which he was fond of quoting or humming to himself in his later years I observed this in particular:—

"But Minstrel Burn cannot assuage
His grief while life endureth,
To see the changes of this age,
Which fleeting time procureth;
For mony a place stands in hard case
Where joy was wont beforrow,
With Humes that dwelt on Leader braes,
And Scotts that dwelt on Yarrow."

[1] See the article *Some Fifty Years Ago* in Fraser's Magazine for June 1879, by Mr. Allingham, then Editor of the Magazine.

Sir Peter Nimmo. He was a lank, miserable, mendicant-looking object, of unknown age, with a blue face, often scarred and patched, and garments not of the cleanest, the chief of which was a long, threadbare, snuff-brown great-coat. His craze was that of attending the University class-rooms and listening to the lectures. So long had this craze continued that a University session without "Sir Peter Nimmo" about the quadrangle, for the students to laugh at and perpetrate practical jokes upon, would have been an interruption of the established course of things; but, as his appearance in a class-room had become a horror to the Professors, and pity for him had passed into a sense that he was a nuisance and cause of disorder, steps had at last been taken to prevent his admission, or at least to reduce his presence about college to a minimum. They could not get rid of him entirely, for he had imbedded himself in the legends and the very history of the University.——Going back from the forties to the thirties of the present century, we find Peter Nimmo then already in the heyday of his fame. In certain reminiscences which the late Dr. Hill Burton wrote of *his* first session at the University, viz. in 1830-31, when he attended Wilson's Moral Philosophy Class, Peter is an important figure. "A dirty, " ill-looking lout, who had neither wit himself, nor any " quality with a sufficient amount of pleasant grotesque- " ness in it to create wit in others," is Dr. Hill Burton's description of him then; and the impression Burton had received of his real character was that he was " merely an idly-inclined and stupidish man of low " condition, who, having once got into practice as a " sort of public laughing-stock, saw that the occupation " paid better than honest industry, and had cunning

"enough to keep it up." He used to obtain meals, Burton adds, by calling at various houses, sometimes assuming an air of simple good faith when the students got hold of the card of some civic dignitary and presented it to him with an inscribed request for the honour of Sir Peter Nimmo's company at dinner; and in the summer-time he wandered about, introducing himself at country houses. Once, Burton had heard, he had obtained access to Wordsworth, using Professor Wilson's name for his passport; and, as he had judiciously left all the talk to Wordsworth, the impression he had left was such that the poet had afterwards spoken of his visitor as "a Scotch baronet, "eccentric in appearance, but fundamentally one of the "most sensible men he had ever met with."[1]—— Burton, however, though thus familiar with "Sir Peter" in 1830-1, was clearly not aware of his real standing by his University antecedents. Whatever he was latterly, he had at one time been a regularly matriculated student. I have traced him in the University records back and back long before Dr. Burton's knowledge of him, always paying his matriculation-fee and always taking out one or two classes. In the *Lapsus Linguæ, or College Tatler*, a small satirical magazine of the Edinburgh students for the session 1823-24, "Dr. Peter Nimmo" is the title of one of the articles, the matter consisting of clever imaginary extracts from the voluminous notebooks, scientific and philosophical, of this "very sage man, whose abilities, though at present hid under a bushel, will soon blaze forth, and give a very different aspect to the state of literature in Scotland." In the session of 1819-20,

[1] Dr. Hill Burton's Reminiscences of Professor Wilson, published in *Wilson's Life* by Mrs. Gordon, ii. 25.

when Carlyle was attending the Scots Law Class, Peter Nimmo was attending two of the medical classes, having entered himself in the matriculation book, in conspicuously large characters, as "PETRUS BUCHANAN NIMMO, ESQUIRE, &c., DUMBARTONSHIRE," with the addition that he was in the 17th year of his theological studies. Six years previously, viz. in 1813-14, he is registered as in the 8th year of his literary course. In 1811-12 he was one of Carlyle's fellow-students in the 2d Mathematical Class under Leslie; and in 1810-11 he was with Carlyle in the 1st Mathematical Class and also in the Logic Class. Peter seems to have been lax in his dates; but there can be no doubt that he was a known figure about Edinburgh University before Carlyle entered it, and that the whole of Carlyle's University career, as of the careers of all the students of Edinburgh University for another generation, was spent in an atmosphere of PETER NIMMO. What Peter had been originally it is difficult to make out. The probability is that he had come up about the beginning of the century as a stupid youth from Dumbartonshire, honestly destined for the Church, and that he had gradually or suddenly broken down into the crazed being who could not exist but by haunting the classes for ever, and becoming a fixture about the University buildings. He used to boast of his high family.

Such was the pitiful object that had been chosen by Carlyle for the theme of what was perhaps his first effort in verse. For the essential portion of his article on Peter Nimmo is a metrical "Rhapsody," consisting of a short introduction, five short parts, and an epilogue. In the introduction, which the prefixed motto, "*Numeris fertur lege solutis*," avows to be in hobbling measure, we see the solitary bard in quest of a subject:—

Art thou lonely, idle, friendless, toolless, nigh distract,
Hand in bosom,—jaw, except for chewing, ceased to act?
Matters not, so thou have ink and see the Why and How;
Drops of copperas-dye make There a Here, and Then a Now.
Must the brain lie fallow simply since it is alone,
And the heart, in heaths and splashy weather, turn to stone?
Shall a living Man be mute as twice-sold mackerel?
If not speaking, if not acting, I can write,—in doggerel.
For a subject? Earth is wonder-filled; for instance, PETER NIMMO:
Think of Peter's "being's mystery": I will sing of him O!

In the first part Peter is introduced to us by his physiognomy and appearance:—

Thrice-loved Nimmo! art thou still, in spite of Fate,
Footing those cold pavements, void of meal and mutton,
To and from that everlasting College-gate,
With thy blue hook-nose, and ink-horn hung on button?

Six more stanzas of the same hobbling metre inform us that Peter is really a harmless pretender, who, for all his long attendance in the college-classes, could not yet decline τιμή; after which, in the second part, there is an imagination of what his boyhood may have been. A summer Sabbath-day, under a blue sky, in some pleasant country neighbourhood, is imagined, with Peter riding on a donkey in the vicinity, and meditating his own future:—

Dark lay the world in Peter's labouring breast:
Here was he (words of import strange),—*He* here!
Mysterious Peter, on mysterious hest:
But Whence, How, Whither, nowise will appear.

Thus meditating on the "marvellous universe" into which he has come, and on his own possible function in it, Peter, caught by the sight of the little parish-kirk upon a verdant knoll, determines, as the donkey canters on with him, that God calls him to be a priest. His transition from Grammar School to College thus accounted for, the third part sings of his first college-

raptures in three stanzas. In the fourth part he is the poor mendicant Peter who has become the Wandering Jew of the University, and whose mode of living is a problem :—

> Where lodges Peter? How his pot doth boil,
> This truly knoweth, guesseth, no man;
> He spins not, neither does he toil;
> Lives free as ancient Greek or Roman.

Whether he may not roost on trees at nights is a speculation; but sometimes he comes to the rooms of his class-fellows. The fifth part of the rhapsody tells of one such nocturnal visit of his (mythical, we must hope) to the rooms of the bard who is now singing :—

> At midnight hour did Peter come;
> Right well I knew his tap and tread;
> With smiles I placed two pints of rum
> Before him, and one cold sheep's-head.

Peter, thus made comfortable, entertains his host with the genealogy of his family, the far-famed Nimmos, and with his own great prospects of various kinds, till, the rum being gone and the sheep's head reduced to a skull, he falls from his chair "dead-drunk," and is sent off in a wheel-barrow! The envoy moralizes the whole rather indistinctly in three stanzas, each with this chorus in italics :—

> *Sure 'tis Peter, sure 'tis Peter:*
> *Life's a variorum.*

Verse, if we may judge from this grim specimen,[1]

[1] *Peter Nimmo: A Rhapsody* is duly registered among Carlyle's anonymous contributions to Fraser's Magazine in Mr. Richard Herne Shepherd's *Bibliography of Carlyle* (1881). Should any one entertain doubts, even after such excellent authority, a glance at the prose preface to the thing, signed O. Y. ("Oliver Yorke"), in *Fraser* for February 1831, will remove them. After specifying Edinburgh University as Peter's local habitat, and estimating the enormously diffused celebrity he has attained by his long persistence there, the preface proceeds: "The

was not Carlyle's element. Hence, though he had not yet abandoned verse altogether, and was to leave us a few lyrics, original or translated, which one would not willingly let die, it had been to prose performances that he looked forward when, on bidding farewell to Kirkcaldy, he included "writing for the booksellers" among the employments he hoped to obtain in Edinburgh. Scientific subjects had seemed the most promising: and among the books before him in "those dreary evenings in Bristo Street" in 1819 were materials for a projected life of the young astronomer Horrox. Irving's letter of December 1819 was the probable cause of that attempt upon the *Edinburgh Review*, in the shape of an article on M. Pictet's Theory of Gravitation, of which we hear in the *Reminiscences*. The manuscript, carefully dictated to a young Annandale disciple who wrote a very legible hand, was left by Carlyle himself, with a note, at the great Jeffrey's house in George Street; but, whether because the subject was not of the popular kind which Irving had recommended, or because editors are apt to toss aside all such chance offers, nothing more was heard of it.

This was in the cold winter of 1819-20; and, to all appearance, Carlyle might have languished without literary employment of any kind for a good while

"world itself is interested in these matters: singular men are at all "times worthy of being described and sung; nay, strictly considered, "there is nothing else worthy. . . . The Napoleon, the Nimmo, are "mystic windows through which we glance deeper into the hidden ways "of Nature, and discern under a clearer figure the working of that inscrut- "able Spirit of the Time, and Spirit of Time itself, who is by some "thought to be the Devil." There may remain some little question as to the date of the *Rhapsody*. That it was written by Carlyle in Annandale seems proved by the phrase "in heaths and splashy weather" in the prologue. The date *may* have been any time before 1831; but before 1821 seems the most likely.

longer, had he not been found out by Dr. David Brewster, afterwards Sir David. The *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, which Brewster had begun to edit in 1810, when he was in his twenty-ninth year, and which had been intended to be in twelve volumes, thick quarto, double-columns, had now, in 1820, reached its fourteenth volume, and had not got farther than the letter *M*. Among the contributors had been, or were, these: Babbage, Berzelius, Biot, Campbell the poet, the second Herschel, Dionysius Lardner, Lockhart, Oersted, Peacock of Cambridge, Telford, and other celebrities at a distance; besides such lights nearer at hand as Brewster himself, Graham Dalzell, the Rev. Dr. David Dickson, Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, the Rev. Dr. Duncan of Ruthwell, Professor Dunbar, the Rev. Dr. John Fleming, the Rev. Dr. Robert Gordon, David Irving, Professor Jameson, the Rev. Dr. John Lee, Professor Leslie, and the Rev. Dr. Andrew Thomson. This was very good company in which to make a literary *début*, were it only in such articles of hackwork as might be intrusted conveniently to an unknown young man on the spot. The articles intrusted to Carlyle were not wholly of this kind; for I observe that he came in just as the poet Campbell had ceased to contribute, and for articles continuing the line of some of Campbell's. *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, *Montaigne*, *Montesquieu*, *Montfaucon*, *Dr. Moore*, *Sir John Moore*, were his first six, all under the letter *M*, and all supplied in 1820, with the subscribed initials "T.C."; and between that year and 1823 he was to contribute ten more, running through the letter *N*, and ending in the sixteenth volume, under the letter *P*, with *Mungo Park*, *William Pitt the Elder*, and *William Pitt the Younger*. It

was no bad practice in short, compact articles of information, and may have brought him in between £35 and £50 altogether,—in addition to something more for casual bits of translation done for Brewster. More agreeable to himself, and better paid in proportion. may have been two articles which he contributed to the *New Edinburgh Review*, a quarterly which was started in July 1821, by Waugh and Innes of Edinburgh, as a successor to the previous *Edinburgh Monthly Review*, and which came to an end, as might have been predicted from its title, in its eighth number in April 1823. In the second number of this periodical, in October 1821, appeared an article of 21 pages by Carlyle on *Joanna Baillie's Metrical Legends*, to be followed in the fourth number, in April 1822, by one of 18 pages on *Goethe's Faust*.

Even with these beginnings of literary occupation, there was no improvement, as far as to 1822 at least, in Carlyle's spirits. "Life was all dreary, 'eerie,'" he says, "tinted with the hues of imprisonment and impossibility." The chief bursts of sunshine, and his nearest approaches to temporary happiness, were in the occasional society of Irving, whether in visits to Irving in Glasgow, or in the autumn meetings and strolls with Irving in their common Annandale, or in Irving's visits now and then to Edinburgh. It was in one of the westward excursions, when the two friends were on Drumclog Moss, and were talking together in the open air on that battle-field of the Covenanters, that the good Irving wound from Carlyle the confession that he no longer thought as Irving did of the Christian Religion. This was in 1820.

More memorable still was that return visit of Irving to Edinburgh, in June 1821, when he took

Carlyle with him to Haddington, and introduced him, at the house of the widowed Mrs. Welsh, to that lady's only child, Jane Baillie Welsh. Irving's former pupil, and thought of by him as not impossibly to be his wife even yet, though his Kirkcaldy engagement interfered, she was not quite twenty years of age, but the most remarkable girl in all that neighbourhood. Of fragile and graceful form, features pretty rather than regular, with a complexion of creamy pale, black hair over a finely arched forehead, and very soft and brilliant black eyes, she had an intellect fit, whether for natural faculty or culture, to be the feminine match of either of the two men that now stood before her.——Thirty years afterwards, and when she had been the wife of Carlyle for four-and-twenty years, I had an account of her as she appeared in those days of her girlhood. It was from her old nurse, the now famous "Betty"; to whom, on the occasion of a call of mine at Chelsea as I was about to leave London for a short visit to Edinburgh, she asked me to convey a small parcel containing some present. The address given me was in one of the little streets in the Old Town, on the dense slope down from the University to the back of the Canongate; and, on my call there to deliver the parcel, I found the old Haddington nurse in the person of a pleasant-mannered woman, not quite so old as I had expected, keeping a small shop. Naturally, she talked of her recollections of Mrs. Carlyle before her marriage; and these, as near as possible, were her very words:—"Ah! when "she was young, she was a fleein', dancin', licht-heartit "thing, Jeannie Welsh, that naething would hae "dauntit. But she grew grave a' at ance. There "was Maister Irving, ye ken, that had been her "teacher; and *he* cam aboot her. Then there was

"Maister ——[I forget who this was]. Then there "was Maister Carlyle himsel'; and *he* cam to finish "her off, like. I'm told he's a great man noo, and unco' "muckle respeckit in London."——That was certainly a memorable day in 1821 when there stood before the graceful and spirited girl in Haddington not only the gigantic, handsome, black-haired Irving, whom she had known since her childhood, but also the friend he had brought with him,—less tall than Irving, of leaner and less handsome frame, but with head of the most powerful shape, thick dark-brown hair several shades lighter than her own, and an intenser genius than Irving's visible in his deep eyes, cliff-like brow, and sad face of a bilious ruddy. It was just about this time that Irving used to rattle up his friend from his desponding depths by the prophecy of the coming time when they would shake hands across a brook as respectively first in British Divinity and in British Literature, and when people, after saying "Both these fellows are from Annandale," would add "Where *is* Annandale?" The girl, looking at the two, may have already been thinking of Irving's jocular prophecy.

A most interesting coincidence in time with the first visit to Haddington would be established by the dating given by Mr. Froude to a memorandum of Carlyle's own respecting a passage in the *Sartor Resartus*.

In that book, it may be remembered, Teufelsdröckh, after he has deserted the popular faith, passes through three stages before he attains to complete spiritual rest and manhood. For a while he is in the state of mind called "The Everlasting No"; out of this he moves on to a middle point, called "The Centre of Indifference"; and finally he reaches "The Ever-

lasting Yes." The particular passage in question is that in which, having long been in the stage of "The Everlasting No," the prey of the most miserable and pusillanimous fears, utterly helpless and abject, there came upon him, all of a sudden, one sultry day, as he was toiling along the wretched little street in Paris called *Rue Saint Thomas de l'Enfer*, a kind of miraculous rousing and illumination :—

"All at once, there rose a thought in me, and I asked myself: 'What *art* thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou for ever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will, or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatso it be; and, as a child of freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!' And, as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me for ever. I was strong, of unknown strength; a spirit, almost a god. Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed: not Fear or whining Sorrow was it; but Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance. Thus had the EVERLASTING NO (*das Ewige Nein*) pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my Being, of my Me; and then was it that my whole Me stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its Protest. Such a Protest, the most important transaction in Life, may that same Indignation and Defiance, in a psychological point of view, be fitly called. The Everlasting No had said, 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's)'; to which my whole Me made answer: '*I* am not thine, but Free, and for ever hate thee!' It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual New-birth, or Baphometic Fire-baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man."

In the memorandum of Carlyle's which Mr. Froude quotes, he declares that, while most of *Sartor Resartus* is mere symbolical myth, this account of the sudden spiritual awakening of the imaginary Teufelsdröckh in the Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer in Paris is a record of

what happened literally to himself one day in Leith Walk, Edinburgh. He remembered the incident well, he says in the memorandum, and the very spot in Leith Walk where it occurred. The memorandum itself does not date the incident; but Mr. Froude, from authority in his possession, dates it in June 1821. As that was the month of the first visit to Haddington, and first sight of Jane Welsh, the coincidence is striking. But, whatever was the amount of change in Carlyle's mind thus associated with his recollection of the Leith Walk incident of June 1821, it seems an exaggeration to say, as Mr. Froude does, that this was the date of Carlyle's complete "conversion," or spiritual "new birth," in the sense that he then "achieved finally the convictions, positive and negative, by which the whole of his later life was governed." In the first place, we have Carlyle's own most distinct assurance in his *Reminiscences* that his complete spiritual conversion, or new-birth, in the sense of finding that he had conquered all his "scepticisms, agonising doubtings, fearful wrestlings with the foul and vile and soul-murdering mud-gods," and was emerging from a worse than Tartarus into "the eternal blue of Ether," was not accomplished till about four years after the present date: viz. during the year which he spent at Hoddam Hill between 26th May 1825 and 26th May 1826. In the second place, it would be a mistake to suppose that the spiritual change which Carlyle intended to describe, whether in his own case or in Teufelsdröckh's, by the transition from the "Everlasting No," through the "Centre of Indifference," to the "Everlasting Yes," was a change of intellectual theory in relation to any system of theological doctrine. The parting from the old theology, in the real case as well

as in the imaginary one, had been complete; and, though there had been a continued prosecution of the question as to the possibility of a Natural Religion, the form in which that question had been prosecuted had not been so much the theoretical one between Atheism or Materialism on the one hand and Theism or Spiritual Supernaturalism on the other, as the moral or practical one of personal duty on either assumption. That the "theory of the universe" which Carlyle had adopted on parting with the old faith was the spiritualistic one, whether a pure Theism or an imaginative hypothesis of a struggle between the Divine and the Diabolic, can hardly be doubted. No constitution such as his could have adopted the other theory, or rested in it long. But, let the Theistic theory have been adopted however passionately and held however tenaciously, what a tumult of mind, what a host of despairs and questionings, before its high abstractions could be brought down into a rule for personal behaviour, and wrapt with any certainty or comfort round one's moving, living, and suffering self! How was that vast Inconceivable related to this little life and its world; or was there no relation at all but that of merciless and irresistible power? What of the origin and purpose of all things visible, and of man amid them? What of death and the future? It is of this course of mental groping and questioning, inevitable even after the strongest general assumption of the Theistic theory, that Carlyle seems to have taken account in his description of a progress from the "Everlasting No" to the "Everlasting Yes"; and what is most remarkable in his description is that he makes every advance, every step gained, to depend not so much on an access of intellectual light as on a sudden stirring at the roots of

the conscience and the will. Teufelsdröckh's mental progress out of the mood of the "Everlasting No" is a succession of *practical determinations as to the conduct of his own spirit*, each determination coming as an inspired effort of the will, altering his demeanour from that moment, and the last bringing him into a final condition of freedom and self-mastery. The effort of the will does indeed diffuse a corresponding change through the intellect; but it is as if on the principle, "Henceforth such and such a view of things *shall* be my view,"—which is but a variation of the Scriptural principle that it is by doing the law that one comes to know the gospel.

The Leith Walk incident, accordingly, is to be taken as the equivalent in Carlyle's case to that first step out of the "Everlasting No" of which he makes so much in the biography of Teufelsdröckh. It was not by any means his complete conversion or emancipation, but it was a beginning. It was, to use his own words, a change at least "in the temper of his misery," and a change for the better, inasmuch as it substituted indignation and defiance for what had been mere fear and whimpering. His mood thenceforth, though still miserable enough, was to be less abject and more stern. On the whole, if this construction of the Leith Walk incident of June 1821 does not make so much of it as Mr. Froude's does, it leaves enough of reason for any Edinburgh youth, when he next chances to be in that straggling thoroughfare between Edinburgh and Leith, to pause near the middle of it, and look about him. The spot must have been just below Pilrig Street, which was Carlyle's starting-point from his lodgings in Moray Street (now Spey Street) on his way to Leith.

There was, at all events, no very *obvious* change

in Carlyle's mood and demeanour in Edinburgh in the latter part of 1821. His own report in the *Reminiscences* is still of the dreariness of his life, his gruff humours, and gloomy prognostications. But, corroborated though this report is in the main by contemporary letters, it would be a mistake, I believe, to accept it absolutely, or without such abatements as mere reflection on the circumstances will easily suggest. It is impossible to suppose that Carlyle, at this period of his life or at any other, can have been all unhappy, even when he thought himself most unhappy. There must have been ardours and glows of soul, great joys and exhilarations, corresponding to the complexity of nervous endowment that could descend to such depths of sadness. From himself we learn, in particular, how the society of Irving, whether in their Annandale meetings, or in Irving's visits to Edinburgh, had always an effect upon his spirits like that of sunrising upon night or fog. Irving's letters must have had a similar effect: such a letter, for example, as that from Glasgow in which Irving had written, "I am beginning to see "the dawn of the day when you shall be plucked "by the literary world from my solitary, and there-"fore more clear, admiration," and had added this interesting note respecting Dr. Chalmers: "Our "honest Demosthenes, or shall I call him Chrysostom? "—Boanerges would fit him better!—seems to have "caught some glimpse of your inner man, though he "had few opportunities; for he never ceases to be "inquiring after you."[1]

Whether such letters brought Carlyle exhilaration or not, there must have been exhilaration for him,

[1] Quoted by Mr. Froude in his *Nineteenth Century* article.

or at least roused interest, on Irving's own account, in the news, which came late in 1821, that Irving was not to be tied much longer to the great Glasgow Demosthenes and his very difficult congregation. After two years and a half of the Glasgow assistantship to Dr. Chalmers, there had come that invitation to the pastorship of the Scotch Church, Hatton Garden, London, which Irving received as exultingly, as he afterwards said, as if it had been a call to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. He passed through Edinburgh on his way to London to offer himself on probation to the little colony of London Scots that thought he might suit them for their minister; and Carlyle was the last person he saw before leaving Scotland. The scene of their parting was the coffee-room of the old Black Bull Hotel in Leith Street, then the great starting-place for the Edinburgh coaches. It was "a dim night, November or December, between nine and ten," Carlyle tells us; but Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Irving* helps us to the more precise dating of December 1821, a day or two before Christmas. They had their talk in the coffee-room; and Carlyle, on going, gave Irving a bundle of cigars, that he might try one or two of them in the tedium of his journey next day on the top of the coach. Who smoked the cigars no one ever knew; for Irving, in the hurry of starting next morning, forgot to take them with him, and left them lying in a stall in the coffee-room.

That meeting at the Black Bull in Leith Street, however, was to be remembered by both. Irving had gone to London to set the Thames on fire; Carlyle remained in Edinburgh for his mathematical teaching, his private German readings, his hackwork for Brew-

ster's *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, and the chances of continued contributorship to the *New Edinburgh Review*. Thus the year 1821 ended, and the year 1822 began.

PART III.—1822-1828

By Carlyle's own account, and still more distinctly by the evidence of other records, the beginning of the year 1822 was marked by a break in his hitherto cloudy sky. How much of this is to be attributed to the continuance of the change of mental mood which has to be dated from June 1821, and associated with the Leith Walk revelation of that month, one can hardly say. One finds causes of an external kind that must have contributed to the result.

One was the Charles Buller engagement. Carlyle's dating of this very important event in his life is rather hazy. In his *Reminiscences* he gives us to understand that, after his parting with Irving at the Black Bull in Edinburgh, just before the Christmas of 1821, he lost sight of Irving altogether for a while, and was chagrined by Irving's silence. He thought their correspondence had come to an end; accounted for the fact as well as he could by remembering in what a turmoil of new occupation Irving was then involved in London; and only came to know how faithful his friend had been to him all the while when the Buller tutorship at £200 a year emerged, "in the spring and summer of 1822," as the product of Irving's London exertions in his behalf. In reading this account, one fancies Irving already established in London, In fact, however, as Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Irving* makes clear, Irving's journey from the

Black Bull to London in December 1821 had been on a trial-visit only. He was back in Glasgow early in February 1822,—whence, on the 9th of that month, he wrote a long letter to his "dear and lovely pupil," Miss Jane Welsh, sending it under cover to his friend "T. C." in Edinburgh, because he was not sure but *she* might be then in Edinburgh too; and it was not till July 1822, and after some difficult negotiation, that Irving, ordained by his native Presbytery of Annan, took his farewell of Glasgow and the West of Scotland, and settled in London definitely. The good turn he had done Carlyle in the matter of the Buller tutorship must have been done, therefore, in his preliminary London visit of January 1822, within a month after his parting from Carlyle at the Black Bull, and before Carlyle's cigars, if Irving had taken them with him, could have been smoked out. It must have been in those January weeks of his probationary preachings before the Hatton Garden people that Irving, moving about as a new Scottish lion in the drawing-room of the English Stracheys of the India House, was introduced to Mrs. Strachey's sister, Mrs. Buller, and, after some meetings with that lady, helped her in a "domestic intricacy." This was that her eldest son, Charles Buller, a very clever and high-spirited boy, of about fifteen years of age, "fresh from Harrow," but too young to go to Cambridge, was somewhat troublesome, and she and her husband were at a loss what to do with him. Irving's advice had been to send the boy for a session or two to the University of Edinburgh, and to secure for him there the private tutorship of a certain young literary man, Mr. Thomas Carlyle, whom Irving knew thoroughly and could highly recommend. Mrs. Buller must

have been a rapid lady, for the thing was arranged almost at once. Carlyle had been communicated with; and he had accepted the tutorship on the terms stipulated by Irving. It must have been on an early day in the spring of 1822 that he made that call at the house of the Rev. Dr. Fleming in George Square, to receive his new pupil, Charles Buller, with Charles's younger brother Arthur, on their arrival in Edinburgh, and had that first walk with them by the foot of Salisbury Crags, and up the High Street from Holyrood, of which there is such pleasant mention in the *Reminiscences*. Dr. Fleming, a fellow-contributor with Carlyle to Brewster's *Encyclopædia*, and a much respected clergyman of Edinburgh, had interested himself greatly in Irving's London prospects, and had tried to smooth the way for him by letters to London friends; and it was in his house in George Square that the two English boys were to board,—Carlyle coming to them daily from his lodgings in Moray Street. He had already, before the arrival of the boys, he tells us, entered Charles Buller in Dunbar's "third Greek class" in the University. The information agrees with the University records; for in the matriculation-book of the session 1821-22 I find one of the very latest matriculations to have been that of "Charles Buller, Cornwall," and I find him to have been all but the last student enrolled for that session in Dunbar's senior class. This of itself would imply that Carlyle's tutorship of the boys must have begun in February 1822; for, as the University session ends in the beginning of April, it would have hardly been worth while to enroll the young Buller in a class after February. The tutorship was a settled thing, there-

fore, while Irving was still in Glasgow, and it had been going on for some months before Irving's permanent removal to London. Carlyle himself seems to have become aware of the haziness of his dating of the transaction; for he inserts, by way of afterthought, a dim recollection of one or two sights of Irving somewhere shortly after the Black Bull parting, and of talks with him about the Buller family while the tutorship was in its infancy. Anyhow, the Buller tutorship, with its £200 a year, was "a most important thing" to Carlyle in "the economies and practical departments" of his life at the time; and he owed it "wholly to Irving." The two boys, Charles Buller especially, took to their new tutor cordially at once, and he cordially to them; and there were no difficulties. In the classics, indeed, and especially in Greek, Charles Buller, fresh from his Harrow training, was Carlyle's superior; but Carlyle could do his duty for both the boys by getting up their Latin and Greek lessons along with them, teaching them as much mathematics as they would learn, and guiding them generally into solid reading, inquiry, and reflection.

Another gleam of sunshine in Carlyle's life early in 1822, or what ought to have been such, was the correspondence with Haddington. Since the visit of the previous June *that* had gradually established itself, till it had become constant, in the form of "weekly or oftener sending books, etc., etc.," with occasional runs down to Haddington in person, or sights of Miss Welsh, with her mother, in Edinburgh. How far matters had gone by this time does not distinctly appear; but there is some significance in the fact that Irving, writing from Glasgow to Miss Welsh immediately after his return from the trial-preachings before

the Hatton Garden congregation in London, had sent the letter through "T. C." The impression made by that letter, as it may be read in Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Irving*, certainly is that Irving's own feelings in the Haddington quarter were still of so tender a kind that the advancing relations of "T. C." to the "dear and lovely pupil" were not indifferent to him. Doubtless there were obstacles yet in the way of any definite engagement between Carlyle and the young lady who was heiress of Craigenputtock,—criticisms of relatives and others who "saw only the outside of the thing"; but the young lady "had faith in her own insight," as she afterwards told Miss Jewsbury, and was likely to act for herself. Meanwhile, to be "aiding and directing her studies," and have a kind of home at Haddington when he chose to go there on a Saturday, was surely a tinge of gold upon the silver of the Buller tutorship.

Moreover, Carlyle's occupations of a literary kind were becoming more numerous and congenial. "I was already getting my head a little up," he says, "translating *Legendre's Geometry* for Brewster; my outlook somewhat cheerfuller." All through the preceding year, it appears from private letters, he had been exerting himself indefatigably to find literary work. Thus, in a letter of date March 1821 to an old college friend: "I have had about twenty plans this winter in "the way of authorship: they have all failed. I have "about twenty more to try; and, if it does but please "the Director of all things to continue the moderate "share of health now restored to me, I will make the "doors of human society fly open before me yet, notwithstanding. My *petards* will not burst, or make "only *noise* when they do. I must mix them better,

"plant them more judiciously; they shall burst, and "do execution too."[1] Again, in a letter of the very next month: "I am moving on, weary and heavy-"laden, with very fickle health, and many discomforts, "—still looking forward to the future (brave future!) "for all the accommodation and enjoyment that render "life an object of desire. *Then* shall I no longer play "a candle-snuffer's part in the great drama; or, if I do, "my salary will be raised."[2] From Mr. Froude we learn that one of the burst petards of 1821 had been the proposal to a London publishing firm of a complete translation of Schiller's Works. That offer having been declined, with the twenty others of which Carlyle speaks, the only obvious increase of his literary engagements at the time of the beginning of the Buller tutorship in 1822 consisted, it would appear, in that connection with the *New Edinburgh Review* of which mention has been already made, and in the translation of *Legendre* which he had undertaken for Brewster. But there was more in the background. There is significance in the fact that his second contribution to the *New Edinburgh*, published in April 1822, when the Buller tutorship had just begun, was an article on Goethe's *Faust*. The German readings which had been going on since 1819 had influenced him greatly; and he was now absorbed in a passion for German Literature. Schiller, Goethe, and Jean Paul were the demigods of his intellectual worship, the authors in whose works, rather than in those of any of the same century in France or Britain, he found suitable nutriment for his own spirit. He had proposed, we see, to translate the whole of Schiller. Of his studies in

[1] Mr. Ireland's copies of early Carlyle Letters, in Mr. Conway's *Memoir*, p. 185.

[2] *Ibid.*

Goethe and their effects we have a striking commemoration in the passage of his *Reminiscences* where he tells of that "windless, Scotch-misty, Saturday night," apparently just about our present date, when, having finished the reading of *Wilhelm Meister*, he walked through the deserted streets of Edinburgh in a state of agitation over the wonders he had found in that book. Henceforth, accordingly, he had a portion of his literary career definitely marked out for him. Whatever else he was to be, there was work enough before him for a while in translation from the German and in commentary on the great German writers for the behoof of the British public. There were but three or four men in Britain competent for that business, and he was one of them.

The translation of *Legendre's Geometry* for Brewster deserves a passing notice. Though not published till 1824,—when it appeared, from the press of Oliver and Boyd of Edinburgh, as an octavo of nearly 400 pages, with the title *Elements of Geometry and Trigonometry; with Notes. Translated from the French of A. M. Legendre, Member of the Institute, etc. Edited by David Brewster, LL.D., etc. With Notes and Additions, and an Introductory Essay on Proportion*,—it was begun by Carlyle in 1822, and continued to occupy him through the whole of that year. His authorship of this Translation remained such a secret, or had been so forgotten, that the late Professor De Morgan, specially learned though he was in the bibliography of mathematics, did not know the fact, and would hardly believe it, till I procured him the evidence. It was one day in or about 1860, if I remember rightly, and in the common room of University College, London, that De Morgan, in the

course of the chats on all things and sundry which I used to have with him there, adverted to the Legendre book. He knew, he said, that Brewster himself could not have done the translation; but he had always been under the impression that the person employed by Brewster had been a certain Galbraith, a noted teacher of mathematics in Edinburgh. Recently, however, he had heard Carlyle named as the man; and, being very doubtful on the point, he wanted very much to be certain. To back my own statement, I undertook to obtain an *affidavit* from head-quarters. "Tell De Morgan," said Carlyle, when I next saw him, "that every word of the book is "mine, and that I got £50 for the job from Brewster; "which was then of some consideration to me." He went on to speak, very much as he does in the *Reminiscences*, of the prefixed little Essay on Proportion, retaining a fond recollection of that section of the book,—begun and finished, he says, on "a happy forenoon (Sunday, I fear)" in his Edinburgh lodgings, and never seen again since he had revised the proof. De Morgan, who had some correspondence on the subject with Carlyle after I had conveyed Carlyle's message, paid it a compliment afterwards in his *Budget of Paradoxes*, by calling it "as good a substitute for the Fifth Book of Euclid as could be given in speech"; and a glance at the Essay in the volume itself will confirm the opinion. It fills but eight printed pages, and consists of but four definitions and three theorems, wound up with these concluding sentences:—"By means of these theorems, and their "corollaries, it is easy to demonstrate, or even to "discover, all the most important facts connected "with the Doctrine of Proportion. The facts given

"here will enable the student to go through these "Elements [Legendre's] without any obstruction on "that head."

The Translation of *Legendre*, with this Essay on Proportion, was Carlyle's farewell to Mathematics. To the end of his life, however, he would talk with great relish of mathematical matters. Once, in the vicinity of Sloane Street, when I mentioned to him a geometrical theorem which Dr. Chalmers had confided to me, with the information that he had been working at it all his life and had never accomplished the solution, Carlyle became so eager that he made me stop and draw a diagram of the theorem for him on the pavement. Having thus picked up the notion of it, he branched out, in the most interesting manner, as we walked on, into talk and anecdote about mathematics and mathematicians, with references especially to Leslie, West, Robert Simson, and Pappus. A marked similarity of character between Carlyle and Chalmers was discernible in the fact that they both avowed a strong personal preference for the old pure geometry over the more potent modern analytics. "In geometry, sir, you are dealing with the *ipsissima corpora*," Chalmers used to say; and Carlyle's feeling seems to have been something of the same kind.

There was a variation of Carlyle's Edinburgh existence, not altogether disagreeable, when the seniors of the Buller family followed the two boys, and made Edinburgh for some time their residence. They took up house in India Street, giving dinners and seeing a good deal of company; and Carlyle, while continuing his lessons to young Charles and Arthur, was thus a good deal in India Street, observing new society, and becoming acquainted with Mr. Buller senior, the

sprightly Mrs. Buller, and their third and youngest child, Reginald. As he makes this advent of the Bullers to Edinburgh to have been "towards the autumn" in 1822, we are able to connect it with another advent.

It was on the 15th of August 1822, after several weeks of enormous expectation, that George IV. arrived in Edinburgh, welcomed so memorably on board his yacht before landing by Sir Walter Scott; and thence to the 29th, when his Majesty took his departure, all Edinburgh was in that paroxysm of loyal excitement and Celtic heraldry and hubbub of which Sir Walter was the soul and manager, and a full account of which is to be found in his Life by Lockhart. It is hardly a surprise to know that what the veteran Scott, with his great jovial heart, his Toryism, and his love of symbols, thus plunged into and enjoyed with such passionate avidity, tasking all his energies for a fortnight to make the business a triumphant success, the moody young Carlyle, then a Radical to the core, fled from in unmitigated disgust. He tells us in his *Reminiscences* how, on seeing the placard by the magistrates of Edinburgh, a day or two before the King's arrival, requesting all the citizens to appear in the streets well-dressed on the day of his Majesty's entry, the men in "black coats and white duck trousers," he could stand it no longer, and resolved to be absent from the approaching "efflorescence of the flunkeyisms." The tutorial duties with the Bullers being naturally in abeyance at such a time, and rooms in Edinburgh being so scarce that the use of Carlyle's in Moray Street was a welcome gift to his merchant friends, Graham and Hope, who were to arrive from Glasgow for the spectacle, he himself

was off for a run in Annandale and Galloway before his Majesty made his appearance; and he did not return till all the hubbub of the fortnight was "comfortably rolled away." I have heard him describe this flight of his from George IV., and from the horrors of that fortnight of feastings, processionings, huzzaings, and bagpipings, round his Majesty in Edinburgh, at more length and in greater detail than in the passage incidentally given to the subject in the *Reminiscences*; and one of the details may be worth relating:—On the first stage out of Edinburgh he put up for the night at some village inn. Even at that distance the "efflorescence of the flunkeyisms" from which he had fled seemed to pursue him; for the talk of the people at the inn, and the very papers that were lying about, were of nothing but George IV. and the Royal Visit. Taking refuge at last in his bedroom, he was fighting there with his habitual enemy, sleeplessness, when, as if to make sleep absolutely impossible for that night, there came upon his ear from the next room, from which he was separated only by a thin partition, the moanings and groanings of a woman, in distress with toothache or some other pain. The "oh! oh!" from the next room had become louder and louder, and threatened to be incessant through the whole night, so that each repetition of it became more and more insufferable. At last, having knocked to solicit attention, he addressed the invisible sufferer through the partition thus: "For God's sake, woman, be articulate. "If anything can be done for you, be it even to ride "ten miles in the dark for a doctor, tell me, and I'll "do it; if not, endeavour to compose yourself." There ensued a dead silence, and he was troubled no more.

The Edinburgh University records show that

"Charles Buller, Cornwall," matriculated again for the session 1822-3 (one of the very earliest students to matriculate that year, for he stands as No. 8 in a total of 2071 matriculations), and that he attended the 2nd Latin class, under Professor James Pillans, who had succeeded Christison as Humanity Professor in 1820. A later name in the matriculation list (No. 836) is that of "Arthur Buller," who had not attended the University with his brother in the previous year, but now joined him in the 2nd Latin class, and also took out Dunbar's 2nd Greek class. In the same matriculation list of 1823-3 (No. 21), as entering the University for the first time, and attending Pillans's 2nd Latin class with the two Bullers, appears "John Carlyle, Dumfriesshire." This was Carlyle's younger brother, the future Dr. John Carlyle, translator of Dante, and the only other of the family who received a University education. He had been for some time a teacher in Annan School, in succession to his brother; and, as he was to choose the medical profession, his present attendance in the Arts classes was but preliminary to attendance in the medical classes in the sessions immediately to follow. He lodged, as the *Reminiscences* tell us, with his brother, in the rooms in Moray Street, Pilrig Street.

The winter of 1822-3 was passed by Carlyle in the Edinburgh routine of his daily walks from those rooms to the house of the Bullers in India Street, his tutorship of the two young Bullers and other intercourse with the Buller family and their guests, and his own German and other readings and literary efforts and schemings. It was in that winter, and not at the earlier date hazily assigned in the *Reminiscences*, that the cessation of correspondence with Irving became a

matter of secret vexation to him. The good Irving, now in the full whirl of his activity with the Hatton Garden congregation and of the London notoriety to which that led, was too busy to write; and it was only by rumour, or by letters from others, that Carlyle heard of Irving's extraordinary doings and extraordinary successes in the metropolis, of the crowds that were flocking to hear him in the little Scotch chapel, and of the stir he and his preachings were making in the London fashionable world. "People have their envies, their pitiful self-comparisons," says Carlyle, admitting that the real joy he felt at the vast and sudden effulgence of his friend into a fame commensurate with his powers was tempered by a sense of the contrast between himself, still toiling obscurely in Edinburgh, a "poor, suffering, handcuffed wretch," and the other Annandale fellow, now so free and glorious among the grandees on the Thames. There was, he adds, just a speck of another feeling. Would Irving be able to keep his head in the blaze of such enormous London popularity? Had he strength enough to guide and manage himself in that huge element with anything like the steadiness that had characterised the behaviour of the more massive and more simple-hearted Chalmers in Glasgow? This feeling, he seems to hint, was increased rather than lessened when Irving's first publication came into his hands,—the famous *Orations and Arguments for Judgment to Come*, by which, early in 1823, the cooler and more critical world was enabled to judge of the real substance of those pulpit-discourses which were so amazing the Londoners. Meanwhile, as Irving himself was still silent, Carlyle could only plod on at his own work. It seems to have been late in 1822, or early in 1823, that, having closed his

contributions to Brewster's *Encyclopædia*, and got the Legendre translation off his hands, he set himself to his *Life of Schiller*.

If, however, the *Life of Schiller* was begun in Edinburgh, it was not finished there. The University session of 1822-3 over, and the spring and summer of 1823 having come, the Bullers, with that aptitude for change of residence which characterises retired Indians and people with plenty of money, had removed to the mansion of Kinnaird in Perthshire, situated on the river Tay, some miles to the north of Dunkeld. Carlyle and his tutorship of young Charles and Arthur Buller had, accordingly, been transferred thither. He must have been there early in June 1823; for a letter of his is extant, dated from Kinnaird House on the 17th of that month, in which he describes his first sight of Dunkeld and its old cathedral, with Dunsinane Hill, and the position of old Birnam Wood in the neighbourhood, and his thoughts in those spots of "the immortal link-boy" that had made them famous. The same letter gives an interesting glimpse of his own mood in the first month of his Tayside residence with the Bullers. "Some time hence," he says to his correspondent, Thomas Mitchell, "when you are seated "in your peaceful manse,—you at one side of the "parlour fire, Mrs. M. at the other, and two or three "little M.'s, fine chubby urchins, hopping about the "carpet,—you will suddenly observe the door fly open, "and a tall, meagre, careworn figure stalk forward, his "grave countenance lightened by unusual smiles in "the certainty of meeting a cordial welcome. This "knight of the rueful visage will, in fact, mingle with "the group for a season, and be merry as the merriest, "though his looks are sinister. I warn you to make

"provision for such emergencies. In process of time "I too must have my own peculiar hearth; wayward "as my destiny has hitherto been, perplexed and "solitary as my path of life still is, I never cease to "reckon on yet paying scot and lot on my own footing."[1] From the *Reminiscences*, where we learn that he was at this time persevering with his *Life of Schiller*, we have his later recollection of those summer and autumn months, and on into late autumn, in Kinnaird House:—

"I was nightly working at the thing in a serious, sad, and totally solitary, way. My two rooms were in the old mansion of Kinnaird, some three or four hundred yards from the new, and on a lower level, overshadowed with wood. Thither I always retired directly after tea, and for most part had the edifice all to myself,—good candles, good wood fire, place dry enough, tolerably clean, and such silence and total absence of company, good or bad, as I never experienced before or since. I remember still the grand *sough* of those woods, or, perhaps, in the stillest times, the distant ripple of the Tay. Nothing else to converse with but this and my own thoughts, which never for a moment pretended to be joyful, and were sometimes pathetically sad. I was in the miserablest dyspeptic health, uncertain whether I ought not to *quit* on that account, and at times almost resolving to do it; dumb, far away from all my loved ones. My poor *Schiller*, nothing considerable of a work even to my own judgment, had to be steadily persisted in, as the only protection and resource in this inarticulate huge wilderness, actual and symbolical."[2]

It was in October 1823 that the first part of *Schiller's Life and Writings* appeared, without the author's name, in the then celebrated *London Magazine* of Messrs. Taylor and Hessey. It was the most important of the metropolitan magazines of that time, counting among its contributors, since its foundation in 1820, such writers as Charles Lamb, Hazlitt, Allan Cunningham, the Rev. Henry Francis Cary, Hamilton

[1] Mr. Ireland's copies of Carlyle's Letters, in *Conway*, pp. 192, 193.
[2] *Reminiscences*, i. 208, 209.

Reynolds, Bryan Waller Procter, Thomas Noon Talfourd, young Thomas Hood, and De Quincey. The admission of Carlyle into such company, the opening of such a London connection at last, ought to have been some gratification to him in his recluse life at Kinnaird; and, doubtless, it was, to a far greater extent than he could remember when he wrote the *Reminiscences*. He does vaguely mention there that, though his own judgment of the merits of his performance was not very high, he had compliments from the editor of the magazine,—*i.e.*, we must suppose, from Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, who were their own editors, unless indeed young Thomas Hood, who was a kind of assistant editor, was the medium of the communication. What is more important is that the *Life of Schiller*, if not all in the editor's hands complete when the first part appeared, must have been reported as complete, or as approaching completeness, in Carlyle's own hands at Kinnaird. This, accordingly, fixes October 1823, or thereabouts, as the date of his passing on from *Schiller* to the new work which he had prescribed for himself as a sequel, viz. the *Translation of the Wilhelm Meister*. It must have been in one of those nocturnal sittings in the late autumn of 1823 in the old mansion of Kinnaird, amid "the grand *sough* of those woods" outside, when his *Schiller* manuscript lay finished beside him, and he had Goethe before him, that there happened that "Tragedy of the Night-Moth" which he has commemorated in one of his metrical fragments—

> "'Tis placid midnight; stars are keeping
> Their meek and silent course in heaven;
> Save pale recluse, for knowledge seeking,
> All mortal things to sleep are given.

But see! a wandering night-moth enters,
Allured by taper gleaming bright;
A while keeps hovering round, then ventures
On Goethe's mystic page to light.

With awe she views the candle blazing;
A universe of fire it seems
To moth-*savante* with rapture gazing,
Or fount whence life and motion streams.

What passions in her small heart whirling,
Hopes boundless, adoration, dread?
At length, her tiny pinions twirling,
She darts, and,—puff!—the moth is dead."

Carlyle's own distinct statement in the *Reminiscences* is that Irving had encouraged him in the *Life of Schiller*, and had "prepared the way" for it in the *London Magazine*. How is this to be reconciled with his repeated references to the total cessation of correspondence between himself and Irving from the date of Irving's definite settlement in London to that week, "late in autumn 1823," when Irving, having married Miss Martin of Kirkcaldy, was on his marriage-jaunt with her in Scotland, and generously determined to pass near Kinnaird, so as to pick up his old friend and have a day or two of his society? One might have thought that it was in this renewed meeting of the two friends in Irving's honeymoon jaunt that there came from Irving the suggestion of the *London Magazine* as a place for the *Schiller*, or the intimation that he had already arranged for it and knew it would be welcome there. This supposition, however, will not cohere with the date of Irving's marriage. It took place at Kirkcaldy on the 13th of October 1823, after the number of the *London Magazine* containing the first part of the *Schiller* had been out for a fortnight; and Irving's marriage-tour in Scotland lasted

through the rest of that month and the whole of November. There must, therefore, have been renewed correspondence between Irving and Carlyle, with arrangements about the *Schiller*, some while before October 1823, though Carlyle's memory had become hazy about that matter too. It is pleasant to be sure of the main fact,—which is that it was to the ever-friendly Irving that Carlyle owed this second great service of his introduction to the *London Magazine*, just as he had already owed him the Buller tutorship.

The winter of 1823-4 seems to have been passed wholly at Kinnaird. At least, there was no re-appearance of the Bullers in Edinburgh that winter, and no re-attendance that winter of Charles Buller or his brother Arthur in any of the classes of Edinburgh University. What we gather from the *Reminiscences* is that, towards the end of the winter, the Bullers had begun to weary of Kinnaird life, and indeed of life in Scotland, and were meditating a return to England, possibly for ultimate settlement in Cornwall, but certainly with a view to London as their intermediate head-quarters. He hints also that they had by this time been a good deal exercised by the moodiness and miserable bad health of the strange tutor they had with them, and whom they respected and admired so much. Might it not be the best arrangement that he should go for a month or two to his native Annandale to recruit his health, and then rejoin them in London, there again to take charge of his pupils?

Taking leave of Kinnaird with that understanding, Carlyle, it appears, rode, either directly thence or very soon afterwards from his father's house at Main-

hill, all the way to Edinburgh, to consult a doctor about his dyspepsia. Was it chronic, and incurable except by regimen? or could it be removed by medical treatment? "*It is all tobacco, sir; give up tobacco,*" was the physician's answer; on which Carlyle's comment is that, having instantly and absolutely followed the advice, and persevered for "long months" in total abstinence from tobacco, without the slightest sign of improvement, he came to the conclusion that he might as well have ridden sixty miles in the opposite direction, and poured his sorrows into the "long hairy ear of the first jackass" he met, as have made that ride to Edinburgh to consult the great authority. This story of the tobacco consultation was a favourite one with Carlyle in later days. I have heard it from him several times, with two additions to what appears in the *Reminiscences*. One was that, the doctor having asked him whether he *could* give up tobacco, "Give it up, sir?" he replied; "I can cut off my left hand with an axe, if *that* should be necessary!" The other was an account of his months of probation of the new no-tobacco regimen. The account took the form of a recollection of himself as staggering for months from tree-trunk to tree-trunk in a metaphorical wood, tobaccoless and dreary, without one sympton of benefit from his self-denial, till at last, sinking at the foot of one of the tree-trunks, and seeing a long clay and a tobacco-pouch providentially lying on the turf, he exclaimed "I will endure this diabolical farce and delusion no longer," and had a good smoke then and there once more, in signal of reverting for ever to his old comfort. Tobacco and a very little good brandy, he used to say to the end of his life, were the only two drugs in the whole

pharmacopœia that he had found of any real utility to the distressed human organism.[1]

It was during the two or three spring months of 1824, spent at Mainhill in Dumfriesshire, under the care of that "best of nurses and of hostesses," his mother, that the *Translation of Wilhelm Meister* was finished. It was in the June of the same year that, having revised the proofs of the three volumes of that book for Messrs. Oliver and Boyd of Edinburgh, who had agreed to be the publishers, as they were also of his translation of *Legendre's Geometry*, and having run up to Edinburgh himself with the last proofs and the preface, and received from Messrs. Oliver and Boyd £180 for the labour, and having taken a farewell at Haddington the purport of which may be guessed, he embarked in the Leith smack

[1] Carlyle's habit of smoking had begun in his boyhood, probably at Ecclefechan before he came to Edinburgh University. His father, he told me, was a moderate smoker, confining himself to about an ounce of tobacco a week, and so thoughtfully as always to have a pipe ready for a friend out of that allowance. Carlyle's allowance, in his mature life, though he was very regular in his times and seasons, must have been at least six times as much. Once, when the canister of "free-smoking York River" on his mantelpiece was nearly empty, he told me not to mind that, as he had "about *half-a-stone* more of the same upstairs."——Another tobacco anecdote of Carlyle, which I had from the late G. H. Lewes, may be worth a place here. One afternoon, when his own stock of "free-smoking York River" had come to an end, and when he had set out to walk with a friend (Lewes himself, if I recollect rightly), he stopped at a small tobacco-shop in Chelsea, facing the Thames, and went in to procure some temporary supply. The friend went in with him, and heard his dialogue with the shopkeeper. York River, having been asked for, was duly produced; but, as it was not of the right sort, Carlyle, while making a small purchase, informed the shopkeeper most particularly what the right sort was, what was its name, and at what wholesale place in the city it might be ordered. "O, we find that this suits our customers very well," said the man. "That may be, Sir," said Carlyle; "but you will find it best in the long run always to deal in the veracities." The man's impression must have been that *the veracities* were some peculiar curly species of tobacco, hitherto unknown to him.

that was to carry him to London. He was then in his twenty-ninth year, and it was his first visit to the Great Babylon. The second part of his *Life of Schiller* had appeared in the number of the *London Magazine* for January 1824; but the rest had still to be published, and would probably appear in the magazine when he was himself in London and had formed personal acquaintance with the editorial powers. Copies of the *Wilhelm Meister* from the press of Messrs. Oliver and Boyd would follow him from Edinburgh; and it would thus be as the anonymous author of the *Life of Schiller* and of the *Translation of Wilhelm Meister* that he would first step into London literary society. For the rest, his prospects were utterly undefined. Whether he should remain in London permanently, or return to Scotland, depended on events not yet calculable. All that was certain was that the Buller tutorship would still be his anchorage for a time in London, as it had been for the last two years in Scotland, and that he had Irving's house for his London home so long as he might choose. It was, in fact, to Irving's house in Myddelton Terrace, Islington, where Irving and his wife were living as a newly-married couple, that Carlyle was to steer himself after the Leith smack had landed him in London river.

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From this point there is a break of two years and four months in Carlyle's life, during which he had nothing to do with Edinburgh. The incidents of that interval may be filled in briefly thus:—

NINE MONTHS IN LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM (*June* 1824–*March* 1825).—Residing with the Irvings at Islington, or in lodgings near them, Carlyle in those months made his first acquaintance with London, and with various persons in it of greater or less note. Introduced at once to the Stracheys, and to the then celebrated Mr. and Mrs. Basil Montagu of Bedford Square, it was through them, or otherwise directly or indirectly through Irving, that he saw something of Coleridge, Charles Lamb, Allan Cunningham, Bryan Waller Procter, Crabb Robinson, and others of literary name, besides such commercial London Scots of Irving's congregation as Sir Peter Laurie, Mr. William Hamilton, and Mr. Dinwiddie, and the young English manufacturing chemist, Mr. Badams of Birmingham. After Mrs. Strachey and the queenly Mrs. Basil Montagu, his most valued new friends in this list, he tells us, were Procter, Allan Cunningham, and Badams. This last, indeed, under pretext of putting him on a regimen that would cure his dyspepsia, lured him away to Birmingham for three months; which three months of residence with Badams in Birmingham, and of rambles with Badams hither and thither in Warwickshire and sights of Joe Parkes and other Birmingham notabilities, have to be interpolated therefore in the general bulk of the London visit. There was also a trip to Dover, in the company of the Stracheys and the Irvings, with a run of some of the party, Carlyle one of them, to Paris, for ten days of Parisian sight-seeing. Altogether, the London visit had been so successful that, when the tutorial engagement with the Bullers came to an end in the course of it,—which it did from the impossibility of an adjustment of Carlyle's views

with Mrs. Buller's ever-changing plans,—the notion among his friends was that he could not do better than remain in London and take his chances as a London man of letters. The concluding portions of his *Schiller* had appeared in the *London Magazine* during the first months of his visit; and before the end of 1825 the five portions into which the work had been cut up for magazine purposes had been gathered together, and published by Messrs. Taylor and Hessey in the form of an octavo volume, with the title *The Life of Friedrich Schiller*, bringing the author £100. It was during his stay in London also that he received his first communication from Goethe, in the form of a brief letter of thanks for a copy of the *Translation of Wilhelm Meister* which had been sent to Weimar some months before. But, though things seemed thus to conspire in favour of the detention of Carlyle in London, he had made up his mind to the contrary; and in March 1825 he turned his back upon the great city, and was on his way once more to his native Dumfriesshire.

Nineteen Months of Dumfriesshire Farm-life (*March* 1825–*October* 1826):—For about two months Carlyle was at his father's farm-house of Mainhill, near Ecclefechan, resting from his return-tour through England, and preparing for the adventure which he had planned. This was an attempt at tenant-farming on his own account in that neighbourhood. A letter of his to Mrs. Basil Montagu, of date May 20, 1825, is still from Mainhill; but on the 26th of that month he entered on the possession of the adjacent little farm of Hoddam Hill, which he had taken on lease from his father's landlord, General Sharpe,—"a neat, compact little farm, rent £100," with "a prettyish-

looking cottage." Here for a whole year he lived, nominally a tenant-farmer, as his father was, and close to his father, but in reality entrusting the practical farm-work to his brother Alick, while he himself, with his mother or one of his sisters for his housekeeper, delved a little for amusement, rode about for health, and pursued his studies and literary tasks,—chiefly his projected translation of *Specimens of German Romance* for the bookseller Tait of Edinburgh. There were letters to and from his London friends; there was once a sight in Annan of poor Irving, whose London troubles and aberrations were by this time matters of public notoriety; there were visits to and from neighbours; but, on the whole, the year was one of industrious loneliness. Though he tells us but little of it, what he does tell us enables us to see that it was a most important and memorable year in his recollection. Perhaps in all Carlyle's life no other year is so important intrinsically. "I call that year idyllic," he tells us, "in spite of its russet coat." This is general; but he gives us vital particulars. It was the time, he distinctly says, of his complete spiritual triumph, his attainment once and for ever to that state of clear and high serenity, as to all the essentials of religion and moral belief, which enabled him to understand in his own case "what the old Christian people meant by *conversion*," and which he described afterwards, in the Teufelsdröckh manner, as the reaching of the harbour of the "Everlasting Yes" at last. The word *happiness* was no favourite one in Carlyle's vocabulary, with reference to himself at least; but he does not refuse even this word in describing his new mental condition through the year at Hoddam Hill. What he felt,

he says, was the attainment of "a constant inward happiness that was quite royal and supreme, in which all temporal evil was transient and insignificant." Even his bodily health seemed to be improving; and the effect extended itself most manifestly to his temper and disposition towards others. "My thoughts were very peaceable," he says, "full of pity and humanity as they had never been before." In short, he was no longer the moody, defiant, mainly despondent and sarcastic Carlyle he had been, or had seemed to be to superficial observers, through the past Edinburgh days, but a calmer, wiser, and more self-possessed Carlyle, with depths of tenderness under all his strength and fearlessness, — the Carlyle that he was to be recognised as being by all who knew him through the next twenty years of his life, and that indeed he continued to be essentially to the very end. To what agency does he attribute this "immense victory," as he calls it, which he had thus permanently gained over his own spirit in this thirtieth year of his age, passed at Hoddam Hill? "Pious musings, communings silent and spontaneous with Fact and Nature in those poor Annandale localities," — these, including the sound on Sundays of the Hoddam kirk-bell coming to him touchingly from the plain below, "like the departing voice of eighteen centuries," are mentioned as accounting for much, but not for all. "I then felt, "and still feel, endlessly indebted to Goethe in the "business. He, in his fashion, I perceived, had "travelled the steep rocky road before me, the first "of the moderns." Not to be forgotten either, as that which tinged the year to perfection in its "idyllic" character, was the flitting across the scene of the

presence that was dearest to him. His pledged bride, no longer at Haddington, but residing with her relatives in Nithsdale, made her first visit to his family in this year; they rode about together for ten days; and the future was arranged. After exactly one year at Hoddam Hill, a difference with General Sharpe, his father's landlord and his own, led to the giving up of the Hoddam farm and of the Mainhill farm at the same time, and to the transference of the whole Carlyle family to Scotsbrig, a much better farm, out of General Sharpe's territories, but still in the vicinity of Ecclefechan. This was in May 1826. At Scotsbrig, however, Carlyle remained little more than four months; for, "as turned out," he married and went to Edinburgh in the following October.

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Carlyle was now for the first time an Edinburgh householder. Comely Bank, where he had his domicile for the first eighteen months of his married life, is a single row of very neat houses, situated in a quiet road leading from the north-western suburb of Edinburgh to Craigleith Quarry, and uniting itself there with the great Dean Road, which has started from the west end of the city at a considerably higher level. The houses lie back a little from the footpath, within railings, each house with its iron gate and little strip of flower-garden in front, while each has a larger bit of walled garden behind. The entire row,—though within a walk of two minutes from the dense suburb

from which it is detached, and of not more than fifteen minutes from the fashionable heart of the city, by the steep slopes of streets ascending from that suburb,—has even yet a certain look of being out in the open. There are fields before the windows, and there is a stretch of fields to the back; and fifty years ago there must have been less of incipient straggling of other buildings in the neighbourhood than there is now. Carlyle's house was No. 21, the last but two at the outer or country end of the row. His natural daily walks thence, when they were not into town up the steep sloping streets spoken of, would be to Craigleith Quarry and the Corstorphine Hills, or past these on the great road towards Queensferry, or aside northwards to the beautiful strip of the shore of the Firth of Forth between Cramond and Granton.

No contemporary record yet accessible gives so distinct a general idea of Carlyle's state of mind and mode of life during his eighteen months at Comely Bank as the following portion of a letter of his to Mrs. Basil Montagu, dated on Christmas Day 1826, or just after he had settled there:—

"Of my late history I need not speak, for you already know it: I am wedded; to the best of wives, and with all the elements of enjoyment richly ministered to me, and health—rather worse than even it was wont to be. Sad contradiction! But I were no apt scholar if I had not learned long ago, with my friend Tieck, that 'in the fairest sunshine a shadow chases us, that in the softest music there is a tone which chides.' I sometimes hope that I shall be well: at other times I determine to be *wise* in spite of sickness, and feel that wisdom is better even than health; and I dismiss the lying cozener Hope entirely, and fancy I perceive that even the rocky land of Sorrow is not without a heavenly radiance overspreading it, lovelier than aught that this Earth, with all its joys, can give. At all events, what right have we to murmur? It is the common lot: the Persian King could not find three happy men in the wide world to write the names of on his queen's tomb, or the Philosopher would have recalled her from death. Every son of Adam has his task to toil at,

and his stripes to bear for doing it wrong. There is one deadly error we commit at our entrance on life, and sooner or later we must lay it aside, for till then there is neither peace nor rest for us in this world: we all start, I have observed, with the tacit persuasion that, whatever become of others, *we* (the illustrious all-important *we*) are entitled of *right* to be *entirely fortunate*, to accumulate all knowledge, beauty, health, and earthly felicity in *our* sacred person, and to pass *our* most sovereign days in rosy bowers, with distress never seen by us, except as an interesting shade in the distance of our landscape. . . . But I must descend from life in general to life in Edinburgh. In spite of ill-health, I reckon myself moderately happy here, much happier than men usually are, or than such a fool as I deserves to be. My good wife exceeds all my hopes, and is, in truth, I believe, among the best women that the world contains. The philosophy of the heart is far better than that of the understanding. She loves me with her whole soul, and this one sentiment has taught her much that I have long been vainly at the schools to learn. Good Jane! She is sitting by me knitting you a purse: you must not cease to love her, for she deserves it, and few love you better. [Mrs. Carlyle and Mrs. Montagu had never yet met, but are here considered as already fast friends, through Carlyle's talks with each about the other.] Of society, in this Modern Athens, we have no want, but rather a superabundance; which, however, we are fast and successfully reducing down to the fit measure. True it is, one meets with many a Turk in grain among these people; but it is some comfort to know beforehand what Turks are, have been, and for ever will be, and to understand that from a Turk no Christian word or deed can rationally be expected. Let the people speak in the Turkish dialect, in Heaven's name! It is their own, and they have no other. A better class of persons, too, are to be found here and there,—a sober, discreet, logic-loving, moderately well-informed class: with these I can talk and enjoy myself; but only talk as from an upper window to people in the street; into the house (of my spirit) I cannot admit them; and the unwise wonderment they exhibit when I do but show them the lobby warns me to lose no time in again slamming-to the door. But what of society? Round our own hearth is society enough, with a blessing. I read books, or, like the Roman poet and so many British ones, 'disport on paper'; and many a still evening, when I stand in our little flower-garden (it is fully larger than two bed-quilts) and smoke my pipe in peace, and look at the reflection of the distant city lamps, and hear the faint murmur of its tumult, I feel no little pleasure in the thought of 'my own four walls' and what they hold. On the whole, what I chiefly want is occupation; which, when 'the times grow better' or my own 'genius' gets more alert and thorough-going, will not fail, I suppose, to present itself. Idle I am not altogether, yet not occupied as I

should be; for to dig in the mines of Plutus, and sell the gift of God (and such is every man's small fraction of intellectual talent) for a piece of money, is a measure I am not inclined to; and for *invention*, for Art of any sort, I feel myself too helpless and undetermined. Some day,—oh that the day were here!—I shall surely speak out those things that are lying in me, and give me no sleep till they are spoken! Or else, if the Fates would be so kind as to show me—that I had nothing to say! This, perhaps, is the real secret of it after all; a hard result, yet not intolerable, were it once clear and certain. Literature, it seems, is to be my trade; but the present aspects of it among us seem to me peculiarly perplexed and uninviting. I love it not: in fact, I have almost quitted modern reading: lower down than the Restoration I rarely venture in English. Those men, those Hookers, Bacons, Brownes, were *men*; but, for our present 'men of letters,' our dandy wits, our utilitarian philosophers, our novel, play, and sonnet manufacturers, I shall only say, May the Lord pity us and them! But enough of this! For what am I that I should censure? Less than the least in Israel."

The mood here, though philosophic, pensive, and critical, is on the whole even cheerful, and accords undeniably with what we should expect from his own statement as to the remarkable change of spirit that had been effected in him during the late idyllic year at Hoddam Hill. It accords also with all that I have been able to learn independently of Carlyle in those now distant days of his early married life.

From two persons in particular I have had intimate accounts of his habits and demeanour in the Comely Bank period. One was the late Rev. David Aitken, D.D., once minister of a Scottish country parish, but in the later part of his life resident in Edinburgh. He was a relative of the Carlyles, and had seen a great deal of them in their own house, and at the tables of various friends, in those old Edinburgh days. His report was that perhaps the most observable thing about Carlyle then was the combination of extraordinary frankness, a habit of speaking out most strikingly and picturesquely whatever was in his mind, with

the most perfect command of temper in meeting objections, evading attempted slights or provocations to anger, or changing the subject when opposition was becoming noisy, or the opponent was evidently a fool. Again and again Dr. Aitken had observed this, and wondered at Carlyle's tact and suavity, especially when he had propounded something startling to commonplace people, and the expression on the faces of some of his auditors was "Who are *you* that dare thus advance notions discomposing to your seniors?" To the same effect is the information I had from another Edinburgh friend of Carlyle in those days, the late Dr. John Gordon. He was most methodic in his arrangement of his time, Dr. Gordon informed me, always reserving the solid hours of the day for his literary work in Comely Bank, but very accessible and sociable in the afternoons and evenings. To Dr. Gordon I definitely put the question, "Was he gloomy and morose, or noted for asperity and sarcastic bitterness in talk?" The answer was: "Not a bit of it, not a bit of it; the pleasantest and heartiest fellow in the world, and most excellent company." It is evident that, whether from more smiling circumstances, or from that drill in self-control which had been imposed upon him by his experience at Hoddam Hill, he was a considerably different being now, in his social demeanour and aspects, from what he had been some years before, when Irving had thought it necessary to remonstrate with him on his fitful and forbidding manners with strangers. But, indeed, they mistake Carlyle utterly who do not know that to the end, with all his vehemence in indignation and invective, and with a stately dignity of manner which repelled irrever-

ent familiarity, and with which the most impudent did not dare to trifle, there was a vast fund in him of what could be described as the homeliest and most genial good-fellowship and the richest old Scottish heartiness. It was not only his faculty of humour,—though those who have never heard Carlyle's laugh, or known how frequently it would interrupt the gathered tempests of his verbal rage and dissipate them in sudden sunburst, can have no idea of his prodigious wealth in this faculty, or of the extent to which it contributed to the enjoyment and after-relish of every hour spent in his society. I have heard the echoes of Sloane Street ring with his great laugh many and many a night between ten and eleven o'clock, and more than once have had to stop by a lamp-post till the grotesque phrase or conception had shaken me to exhaustion in sympathy with him and the peal had ended. But better still was the proof of the depths of pleasant kindliness in his nature, his power of being actually happy himself and of making others happy, in some of those evening hours I have spent with him in the well-remembered dining-room in Chelsea. Then, both of us, or one of us, reclining on the hearth-rug, that the wreaths of pipe-smoke might innocently ascend the chimney, and Mrs. Carlyle seated near at some piece of work, and public questions laid aside or his vehemences over them having already subsided for that evening, how comfortable he would be, how simple, how husbandly in his looks round to his wife when she interjected one of her bright and witty remarks, how happy in the flow of casual fireside chat about all things and sundry, the quoting of quaint snatches of ballad or lyric, or the resuscitation of old Scottish memories! This mood of pleasant and easy sociability,

which always remained with him as one into which he could sink when he liked out of his upper moods of wrath and lamentation, must have been even more conspicuous and common, more nearly habitual, in those Comely Bank days when he felt himself for the first time a full citizen and householder of the Modern Athens, and was not disinclined to friendly intimacy with the other Athenians. Then, as always, the basis of his nature was a profound constitutional sadness, a speculative melancholy, in the form of that dissatisfaction with all the ordinary appearances and courses of things, that private philosophy of protest and non-conformity, which made him really a recluse even when he seemed most accessible and frank. His talk with most of the Edinburgh people, even when apparently the friendliest, was therefore, as he told Mrs. Montagu, like talk from an upper window to people passing in the streets; and into the real house of his spirit few were admitted farther than the lobby. But he had at least disciplined himself into all the requisite observances of good-humoured courtesy, and learnt to practise in his own demeanour the maxim he had about this time thrown into verse :—

> "The wind blows east, the wind blows west,
> And there comes good luck and bad;
> The thriftiest man is the cheerfulest;
> 'Tis a thriftless thing to be sad, sad;
> 'Tis a thriftless thing to be sad."

What he lacked most, as he told Mrs. Montagu, was a fit occupation. His four volumes of *Specimens of German Romance,* consisting of translations from Musæus, La Motte Fouqué, Tieck, Hoffman, Jean Paul, and Goethe, with biographical and critical notices of these authors, had been already printed,

and stored in Ballantyne's warehouses, before he had settled in Comely Bank, and were published by Tait early in 1827. As they had been done originally on commission, they may have brought something more considerable in the way of payment than if they had been a voluntary labour. But, when these were out, what was he to do next? Fortunately, that question was soon answered.

It was in the spring of 1827 that, by means of a friendly letter of introduction sent from London by Mrs. Montagu's son-in-law, Procter, *alias* "Barry Cornwall," Carlyle formed his memorable acquaintance with Jeffrey. The incidents of that acquaintance, from Carlyle's first call on Jeffrey in George Street with Procter's note, when Jeffrey received him so kindly, and said "We must give you a lift," on to the ripening of the acquaintance by Jeffrey's calls at Comely Bank, his pretty gallantries and wit-encounters with the fascinating young bride, and the frequent colloquies and amicable little disputations between Jeffrey and Carlyle in Jeffrey's leisurely rides to his country-house at Craigcrook, or in that picturesque old mansion itself, have all been immortalised in the *Reminiscences*. Nowhere is there such a sketch of Jeffrey in our literature, such perfect portraiture and appreciation of that celebrated man; and the only question that remains is whether Carlyle has quite done justice there to Jeffrey's kindness to himself. No doubt he wrote with a strict conscience, and knew better what he was about than readers can now know for him. Still one does carry away an impression that very seldom has there been so much attention by a celebrity of fifty-three years of age to a rising junior, or so much of care in befriending him practically,

as the good Jeffrey bestowed, in 1827 and for some subsequent years, on a young man of letters so utterly different from himself in character, so intractable to his Whig teaching, and so wrapt up in a certain foreign and unintelligible Mr. Goethe. Something of this feeling, indeed, does appear in many passages of Carlyle's sketch, as when he says: "Jeffrey's acquaint-" anceship seemed, and was for the time, an immense " acquisition to me, and everybody regarded it as my " highest good fortune." And no wonder. From being a mere translator from the German, or writer of hack articles in obscure places, Carlyle became a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*. In June 1827, or within a month or two after his introduction to Jeffrey, appeared his first article in the Review, *Jean Paul Friedrich Richter*, in twenty pages; and in the very next number, in October 1827, appeared his more full and elaborate article, in forty-eight pages, entitled *State of German Literature*. They caused, as he tells us, "a sensation among the Edinburgh buckrams," and were widely criticised in the newspapers, with the effect of setting "many tongues wagging" about the strange fellow in Comely Bank to whom Jeffrey had given such unusual licence of innovation on the established doctrines of the Review, and who was trying to found a school of "German Mysticism." At all events, people who liked that kind of matter and were interested in German Literature knew thenceforth where to apply; and, a so-called *Foreign Review and Continental Miscellany* having been started in London, Carlyle was eagerly invited to contribute. In the first number of this new periodical, in January 1828, appeared his *Life and Writings of Werner*, in forty-seven pages; and in the second number, in April 1828, his *Goethe's Helena*,

in forty pages. These two articles in the *Foreign Review*, with the two already contributed to the *Edinburgh*, form the whole of Carlyle's known writings during the Comely Bank period.

One of the most interesting men in Edinburgh during Carlyle's eighteen months at Comely Bank was Sir William Hamilton. The name of Sir William, and his reputation for universal erudition and for devotion to philosophy and metaphysics, had been known to Carlyle from the later days of his studentship in Edinburgh University. In then passing the house where Sir William lived, and seeing the light burning in Sir William's room late at nights, he would think to himself: "Ay, *there* is a real scholar, a man of the right sort, busy with his books and speculations!" Since then he had formed some slight personal acquaintance with Sir William by meetings with him in the Advocates' Library; but it was after the settlement in Comely Bank in 1826, when Sir William was thirty-eight years of age, and had been nominally for five years Professor of History in Edinburgh University, that the acquaintanceship reached the stage of familiarity. Carlyle has commemorated it in a few pages contributed to Professor Veitch's *Memoirs of Sir William Hamilton*, published in 1869, thirteen years after Sir William's death. "I recollect hearing much more of "him," Carlyle there writes, "in 1826 and onward "than formerly: to what depths he had gone in study "and philosophy; of his simple, independent, meditative habits, ruggedly athletic modes of exercise, "fondness for his big dog, etc. etc.: everybody seemed "to speak of him with favour, those of his immediate "acquaintance uniformly with affectionate respect. I "did not witness, much less share in, any of his

" swimming or other athletic prowesses. I have once " or twice been on long walks with him in the Edin- " burgh environs, oftenest with some other companion, " or perhaps even two, whom he had found vigorous " and worthy: pleasant walks and abundantly en- " livened with speech from Sir William." He proceeds to describe a peculiarity of Sir William's talk, when, in expounding some difficult point perfectly lucid to himself, he would say " *The fact is*," and then, after plunging for a while through a tough jungle of words and distinctions, would repeat " *The fact is*," and so go on again, without ever quite succeeding in clutching "the fact" so as to bring it out to his satisfaction. There is also an account of a debate on Craniology between Sir William and Mr. George Combe one evening at a great meeting of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, when Sir William, in Carlyle's opinion, utterly demolished Combe and his phrenology by exhibiting two skulls, one the skull of a Malay murderer and the other the skull of George Buchanan, and showing that by the phrenological measurements the Malay murderer was much the superior man. That presence of Carlyle in the Royal Society rooms seems, however, to have been on a winter visit to Edinburgh a year or two after the time of his residence in Comely Bank. That he knew those rooms by more attendances in them than one I am positively certain; for he recollected the excellent and rare quality of the tea that, from some exceptional opportunity of correspondence with China, used then to be served to members and visitors of the Edinburgh Royal Society after the business of the meetings.

Another Edinburgh acquaintanceship of the Comely Bank time was that with John Wilson, the ever-

famous "Christopher North." He had been lord of *Blackwood* since 1817, and since 1820 the admired and adored of all the youth of Edinburgh University, for his magnificent mien and stature, and the legends of his feats of strength, pedestrianism, and pugilism, no less than for his eloquent prelections in the Moral Philosophy professorship. To know the great Wilson by his figure and face as he strode, yellow-haired and white-hatted, along Princes Street or George Street, was a mere privilege of being in the same city with him. You could not miss him if you were in either of those streets, and on the outlook for him, any three days in succession; and once seen he was in your memory for ever. That amount of cognisance of Wilson in Edinburgh had been Carlyle's, as everybody else's, for not a few years; but it was now, in Wilson's forty-second or forty-third year, and Carlyle's thirty-second or thirty-third, that they first met in private and shook hands. It was in the rooms of the Dr. John Gordon already mentioned as one of Carlyle's most intimate friends of those days. Carlyle once described to me the meeting, and how late they sat, and in what a glory of talk, though the details had been forgotten, they spun out the hours, not without hospitable aids on the table, whether of the foreign ruby and amber sorts or of the more potent native crystal. It was so very late, or rather such early morning, before they parted, I heard afterwards from Dr. Gordon himself, that, when Wilson rose and threw open the window, clear daylight had come, and the birds were singing. Regular to strictness as were Carlyle's habits always, and obliged as he was to such strictness by the state of his health, he would venture now and then on such exceptionally late conviviality

on sufficient occasion or in fit company, and did not find himself any the worse for it. Other instances of it are within my knowledge, when he sat for long hours with far humbler companions than Christopher North, and was the life and soul of their little symposium.[1]

De Quincey had not made Edinburgh definitively his home in 1827 and 1828; but, his connection with *Blackwood* having then begun, he was a good deal in Edinburgh through those years, astray for reasons of finance from his family in Grasmere, and quartered with his friend Wilson, or in Edinburgh lodgings of his own. In recollection of his severe review of Carlyle's Translation of *Wilhelm Meister* in the *London Magazine* for August and September 1824, there was considerable shyness on his part in meeting Carlyle now; but, a meeting having happened somehow, and that disagreeable recollection having been sunk, no one was a more welcome visitor to Carlyle and his wife in Comely Bank than the weird little Opium-eater. The passage in the *Reminiscences* in which Carlyle gives his own and Mrs. Carlyle's impressions of De Quincey as they then knew him reveals on the whole, with all its qualifications of critical estimate, a lingering regard to the last for De Quincey as one of the most remarkable British men of genius in his generation; and there is perfectly conclusive evidence that in the Comely Bank days his regard for De Quincey was something still higher and more affectionate. But, indeed, all through those days Carlyle's literary sympathies, politically a Radical

[1] There does not seem to have been much direct intercourse between Wilson and Carlyle after the meeting mentioned, though there were cordial exchanges of regards between them, and some incidental compliments to Carlyle in *Blackwood*.

sui generis though he was, and the *protégé* though he was of the Whig potentate Jeffrey, were rather with that Tory set of Edinburgh intellectualities of whom De Quincey was one, and of whom Wilson in *Blackwood* was the public chief, than with Jeffrey's more narrow-laced clientage of the Blue-and-Yellow. His acquaintance with Lockhart, who had been in London since 1826 as editor of the *Quarterly Review*, can hardly date from this period; but among those I have heard him speak of as Edinburgh friends of his, almost certainly of this period, was the accomplished George Moir, then one of the young Tory lawyers of literary note about the Parliament House, and afterwards Professor of Belles Lettres in the University. How many other persons, Whig or Tory, distinguished or undistinguished, came about him in Comely Bank, who can tell now? Miss Jewsbury, indeed, in her notes of Mrs. Carlyle's talks with her, is very comprehensive and summary on that subject. "Whilst they were in Edinburgh," says Miss Jewsbury of Carlyle and his wife, "they knew everybody worth knowing: Lord Jeffrey was a great admirer of hers, and an old friend; Chalmers, Guthrie, and many others." Miss Jewsbury is all wrong in her dates here. Guthrie was then a young man living totally unheard of in his native Forfarshire, and not yet even a parish minister; and the great Chalmers, who had left Glasgow and its excitements in 1823 for the quiet leisure of the Moral Philosophy Professorship at St. Andrews, can have been but an occasional visitor to Edinburgh from that date till 1828, when they invited him to the more national post of the Professorship of Theology in Edinburgh University. Carlyle's distinct statement in the *Remin-*

iscences is that, after his casual meetings with Chalmers in Glasgow in Irving's company in 1820 and 1821, he "never saw him again" till May 1847, when the noble old man, in his final visit to London a week or two before his death, called upon him, and sat an hour with him, in his house in Chelsea.

More precious by far to Carlyle than all the acquaintanceships Edinburgh afforded, or could afford, was his correspondence with Goethe. It was to this great intellect, this German soul of light and adamant, now verging on his eightieth year, and whom he was never to behold in the flesh, that his thoughts turned incessantly in his domestic musings in Comely Bank, or in his walks anywhere, with or without Jeffrey, between Arthur Seat and the Corstorphines.

Besides the four Review articles of 1827 and 1828, there had appeared, since that *Translation of Wilhelm Meister* in 1824 which Goethe had acknowledged in the note from him received by Carlyle in London, the *Life of Schiller* in 1825, and the *Specimens of German Romance* in 1827, this last completing the translation of the *Meister* by the addition of the "Meister's Travels" to "Meister's Apprenticeship." These had been sufficient texts for new communications between the sage at Weimar and his Scottish admirer; and such accordingly there had been. Already there had been a beginning of the series of graceful little presents from Mrs. Carlyle to Goethe and from Goethe to Mrs. Carlyle of which we hear in the Goethe-Carlyle story as a whole; and there had been more letters between the two men. Nay, Carlyle and his writings had become a topic of frequent talk with Goethe in Weimar. It was on Wednesday, the 25th of July 1827, for example, that Goethe,

having just received a letter from Sir Walter Scott, dated from Edinburgh on the 9th of that month, in reply to a letter of compliment and admiration which he had addressed to Scott circuitously in the preceding January, used these memorable words to Eckermann, after showing him Scott's letter and expressing his delight with it:—"I almost wonder that Walter Scott "does not say a word about Carlyle, who has so "decided a German tendency that he must certainly "be known to him. It is admirable in Carlyle that, "in his judgment of our German authors, he has "especially in view the *mental and moral core* as "that which is really influential. Carlyle is a *moral* "*force of great importance*: there is in him much "for the future, and we cannot foresee what he will "produce and effect." To the same purport were Goethe's words on again speaking to Eckermann about Carlyle some time afterwards,—"What an earnest "man he is! and how he has studied us Germans! "he is almost more at home in our literature than "we ourselves."

Goethe's surprise at Scott's silence about Carlyle was an acute thrust, though made a little in the dark. Who does not regret to have it to say now that Carlyle never exchanged a word with Sir Walter? Yet this is the fact. That man of men in Edinburgh, of greater importance and interest to her than all her other celebrities put together, remained a stranger to the fellow-citizen that was worthiest to know him and that would fain have known him well. How did this happen?

Any time for the last fifteen or sixteen years Carlyle had, of course, been familiar with the stalwart figure of Scott, as he might be seen in the legal crowd

in the Parliament House, or in his slow walk homewards thence, by the Mound and Princes Street, to his house in Castle Street. Further, it must have been in the Comely Bank days that Carlyle and his wife, when they chanced now and then to be in Princes Street together, would bestow those more particular glances of curiosity on Scott's approaching figure of which I have heard Carlyle speak. The little dogs that were passing would jump up, they observed, to fawn on the kindly lame gentleman whom they knew by instinct to be a friend to all their species; and Scott, they observed, would stoop to pat the animals, or would look down on them benevolently from beneath his shaggy eyebrows. Observing this so admiringly more than once, why should they themselves have had to pass the great man on such occasions without interchange of personal greetings?

Recently, it is true, circumstances had been less propitious than formerly for access to Scott by persons desiring his acquaintance. When Carlyle and his wife took up house in Edinburgh, that fatal year for Scott was just closing in which there had come the sudden crash of his fortunes. This, followed by the death of Lady Scott, had converted him into a lonesome and bankrupt widower, incapable any longer of his customary hospitalities in Castle Street, and indeed bereft of that house, as of all else, for the behoof of his creditors, and toiling to redeem himself by his *Life of Napoleon* and other colossal drudgery in lodgings in North St. David Street. But that crisis of his downfall had passed; and the year 1827 had seen him more like himself, and domiciled again, more in household fashion, first in Walker Street, and then in Shandwick Place. There had been the great

Theatrical Fund Dinner in Edinburgh on the 23d of February 1827, when Sir Walter was in the chair, and when, in responding to the toast of his health, he divulged formally, amid plaudits such as had never been heard in that hall before, the already open secret that he was the sole author of the Waverley Novels. Later in the same year the voluminous *Life of Napoleon* was published, with the first series of the *Chronicles of the Canongate* besides, and the *Tales of a Grandfather* had been begun. Any time, therefore, shortly before or shortly after that month of July 1827 when Goethe was so much gratified by the receipt of Scott's letter, there was nothing but the most untoward fate to hinder such a meeting between Scott and Carlyle as would have been pleasant to both. Untoward fate did intervene, however, and with almost diabolic malignity. The story is as follows :—

Struck with the anomaly that two such men should be living together in Edinburgh without knowing each other, Goethe himself had taken very special pains to put the matter right. On the 1st of January 1828, resuming his correspondence with Carlyle after a break of some months, he sent off from Weimar a letter to Carlyle about various matters then in discussion between them, but chiefly to announce that it was to be followed speedily by a box containing several parcels of presents. Most of the presents were to be for Carlyle himself or Mrs. Carlyle, in the form of volumes or sets of volumes selected for them ; but one of the parcels was to consist of six bronze medals, respecting which Carlyle was requested to take some special trouble. "I send also six "medals, three struck at Weimar and three at "Geneva," Goethe wrote ; "two of which please

"present to Sir Walter Scott, with my best re-
"gards; and, as to the others, distribute them to
"well-wishers." A fortnight afterwards, *i.e.* on the 15th of January, the box was duly dispatched from Weimar; but not till the 12th of April did it reach the Carlyles at 21 Comely Bank, though they had received the letter announcing it about two months before. On being opened, it was found to contain, besides the promised medals and other parcels, all neatly and separately packed, another letter from Goethe by way of continuation of the former post-letter. "If you see Sir Walter Scott," were the first words of this second missive, "pray offer him "my warmest thanks for his valued and pleasant "letter, written frankly in the beautiful conviction "that man must be precious to man. I have also "received his *Life of Napoleon*; and during these "winter evenings and nights I have read it through "attentively from beginning to end." Then follows an expression at some length of Goethe's enjoyment of the great book and high appreciation of its merits. These are characterised glowingly and yet carefully; and altogether the criticism was calculated to please Scott extremely, and to be received by him as a most friendly acknowledgment of his attention in having sent a copy of his *Life of Napoleon* to his great German contemporary. What interests us, however, is Goethe's obvious purpose in having made Carlyle the medium of communication between himself and Scott. He wanted to bring the two men together; and with what delicacy of courteous invention he had manœuvred for his object! It was Carlyle that was to deliver to Scott the two medals intended as Goethe's recognition of Scott's supremacy

in the Literature of Great Britain; and it was Carlyle to whom Goethe sent his first impressions of Scott's latest large work, and that in a manner almost amounting to an injunction that they should be reported to Scott textually.

If Goethe's purpose failed, it was not through any fault or negligence on Carlyle's part. On the 13th of April 1828 he wrote the following letter to Sir Walter:

EDINBURGH: 21 COMELY BANK:
13th April 1828.

SIR,—In February last I had the honour to receive a letter from Von Goethe, announcing the speedy departure from Weimar of a packet for me, in which, among other valuables, should be found "two medals," to be delivered, *mit verbindlichsten Grüssen*, to Sir Walter Scott. By a slow enough conveyance this *Kästchen*, with its medals in perfect safety, has at length yesterday come to hand, and now lays on me the enviable duty of addressing you.

Among its multifarious contents, the Weimar Box failed not to include a long letter,—considerable portion of which, as it virtually belongs to yourself, you will now allow me to transcribe. Perhaps it were thriftier in me to reserve this for another occasion; but, considering how seldom such a Writer obtains such a Critic, I cannot but reckon it a pity that this friendly intercourse between them should be anywise delayed.

[Carlyle here extracts from Goethe's second letter, in the original German, the whole of the portion relating to Scott's *Napoleon*.]

With regard to the medals,—which are, as I expected, the two well-known likenesses of Goethe himself,—it could be no hard matter to dispose of them safely here, or transmit them to you, if you required it, without delay; but, being in this curious fashion appointed as it were Ambassador between two Kings of Poetry, I would willingly discharge my mission with the solemnity that beseems such a business; and naturally it must flatter my vanity and love of the marvellous to think that by means of a Foreigner whom I have never seen I might now have access to my native Sovereign, whom I have so often seen in public, and so often wished that I had claim to see and know in private and near at hand.

Till Whitsunday I continue to reside here, and shall hope that some time before that period I may have opportunity to wait on you, and, as my commission bore, to hand you these memorials in person. Meanwhile I abide your further orders in this matter; and so, with

all the regard which belongs to one to whom I, in common with other millions, owe so much, I have the honour to be, sir, most respectfully your servant, THOMAS CARLYLE.

Besides the *two* medals specially intended for you, there have come *four* more, which I am requested generally to dispose of amongst "*Wohlwollenden*." Perhaps Mr. Lockhart, whose merits in respect of German Literature, and just appreciation of this its Patriarch and Guide, are no secret, will do me the honour to accept of one, and direct me through your means how I am to have it conveyed?

As the wording of this letter shows, Carlyle was aware when he wrote it that Sir Walter was not then in Edinburgh. He had gone off, exactly ten days before, *i.e.* on the 3d of April, for a tour in England, and a plunge once more, partly on business and partly for mere pleasure, into the world of London. It would have been better if Carlyle had delayed till he came back; but, thinking the matter too important for that, he had gone, it would appear, to Scott's house, then in Shandwick Place, ascertained his London address, and seen the letter dispatched. That it did reach Scott in London is certain; for the autograph is still extant, with the London post-mark of 17th April 1828 upon it, just as Scott must have had it in his hands that day in the house of his son-in-law Lockhart in Regent's Park. He must have glanced at it carelessly, however,—so carelessly as hardly to have mastered its purport; for in his jottings in his Diary for that day, where he would naturally have taken note of so interesting an occurrence as a new message from Goethe, there is no mention of it whatever. The omission is explained perhaps by one phrase which does occur among those jottings. "In this "phantasmagorical place the objects of the day come "and depart like shadows" were the words with which, trying to record in his journal late that night the

incidents of an unusually busy day,—beginning with a round of forenoon and afternoon calls, and ending with a dinner at Samuel Rogers's and an appearance afterwards at an evening party at Lady Davy's,—he almost gave up the attempt as hopeless, so difficult was it to recall coherently what one had done or seen during any twelve hours in such a vast and brain-dizzying place as London. Carlyle's letter, delivered to him that morning, or possibly lying on his table for him at the moment of his writing those words, may have been one of the "objects" that had slipped his cognisance. And, if so that day, the chance was poor enough of its being remembered sufficiently on any subsequent day during the rest of Scott's stay in the great metropolis. Day after day till the 26th of May, as the Journal shows, there was a continued succession of lionisings for him in the shape of calls on him from notabilities, dinners in his honour, applications to him to sit for his portrait or his bust, etc. etc. One of the dinners was with his Majesty King George IV. himself; another was at the Duchess of Kent's, where he was presented to "the little Princess Victoria," and looked at her with keen interest, wondering whether the little lady, then not nine years of age, had yet been made aware of her great destiny; several times he was with the Duke of Wellington; and of the other celebrities whom he saw, or among whom he moved, in the course of his stay,—statesmen, bishops, lawyers, men of letters, artists, etc.,—he could keep no complete reckoning. For a man in the fifty-seventh year of his age the whirl of such a series of London excitements might not, in ordinary cases, have been

too much; but Sir Walter had been obviously in failing health already for the last year or two, and there had been symptoms even, recognisable by himself and his Edinburgh friends, of jaded mental energy. In his case the £250 which, as he tells us, his visit to London cost him, may not have been the only damage. Little wonder, at all events, that one of his letters from Edinburgh, even though it contained a message from Goethe, should have escaped his attention.

Meanwhile Carlyle was growing anxious about the fate of the letter. On the 18th of April, five days after he had sent it to Scott, he had written to Goethe, informing him that this had been done. "To Sir "Walter Scott, who is at present in London," the letter said, "I have already written, announcing so "delightful a message, and even transcribing for him "what you say of his *Life of Napoleon*: a friendly "criticism which, from such a quarter, must gratify "him highly"; and, after a sentence or two more on the subject of that criticism, these words were added: "Ere long I expect to see Sir Walter and present to "him your medals in person." The expectation was never to be fulfilled. Week after week had passed, and no reply to his first letter had been received, when the Whitsunday term arrived at which, as he had informed Scott, he was to leave Edinburgh. In these circumstances he addressed a brief note to Scott, referring to his former letter, and explaining that, as he could not now hope for the honour of presenting the Goethe medals in person, he had left them in charge of Mr. Jeffrey, who would doubtless deliver them to Sir Walter on the first convenient opportunity. This note, dated the 23d of May, was, in fact, written

in Jeffrey's own house in Moray Place, where Carlyle and his wife were residing for a few days by invitation before their departure for Craigenputtock. They had left Comely Bank a day or two before, had sent on their furniture to Craigenputtock in carts, and were to follow immediately themselves.

The note must have reached Sir Walter on the 27th of May, the very last day of his stay in London. Leaving London that day, as his journal shows, he began the homeward journey through the middle and northern English counties which was to bring him to Abbotsford on the 2d of June, and thence to Edinburgh on the 4th of June. The Carlyles were then gone; and any acknowledgment that Carlyle could now receive of either of his two missives could only be by letter from Sir Walter in Edinburgh to Craigenputtock. Something of the sort seems to have been expected by Carlyle; for it was not till the 25th of September that he wrote that first of his letters to Goethe from Craigenputtock in which he told Goethe of the ending of the business of the medals. "Sir "Walter Scott," he then wrote, "has received your "Medals several months ago,—not through me directly, "for he had not returned to Edinburgh when I left it, "but through Mr. Jeffrey, our grand 'British Critic'; "to whom, as I learn, Sir Walter expressed himself "properly sensible of such an honour from one of his "masters in Art." This leaves no doubt that the medals actually came into Sir Walter's hands as soon as he had returned to Edinburgh; and the only question that remains is how it could have happened that the two letters from Carlyle heralding the medals, and connected with them so vitally, received no acknowledgment, and so that Goethe's design of bring-

ing Carlyle into contact with Sir Walter Scott was miserably frustrated.

To this day the affair remains somewhat of a mystery. That Scott, the largest-hearted of men, the kindliest, the most courteous, the most attentive to every punctilio of business or of social etiquette, should have deliberately, of his own accord, left such letters unanswered, it is next to impossible to suppose; and it is hardly less difficult to suppose that, if any one had tried to prejudice him against Carlyle in connection with them, he would have allowed the interference to prevent him from doing what was independently proper. All things considered, one must revert, I think, to the opinion already suggested by the fact that there is no mention in Scott's journal during his weeks in London either of the Carlyle letters or of the message they conveyed from Goethe. In the bustle and hurry of his London engagements, and then of his leave-taking for his return journey to Scotland, he had never, we are to conclude, read the letters, or at all events the first and principal one, with sufficient attention to apprehend the contents, and so, having set them aside on their first receipt, had forgotten all about them. To be sure, the medals were ultimately delivered to him by Jeffrey; but one can imagine that they were delivered in a casual manner, and without such explanation of the relative circumstances as might have brought the missing letters to his recollection and caused him to look for them. What is certain is that they lay among his papers, to be found there after his death, and are still preserved. That Lockhart had read them is proved by a reference in his *Life of Scott*. So slight is the reference, however, and so vaguely worded, that it told virtually nothing. Not till the

publication in 1887 of the *Correspondence between Goethe and Carlyle*, edited by Mr. C. E. Norton, was any real light thrown on the subject; and not till the appearance in 1890 of *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott from the Original Manuscript*, edited and published by Mr. David Douglas of Edinburgh, and containing a copy of Carlyle's first letter to Scott, were the facts fully revealed.[1]

The removal of Carlyle from Edinburgh to Craigenputtock, while connecting itself rather remark-

[1] As the dates in this sentence will suggest, the last few paragraphs, narrating the story of Goethe's frustrated attempt to bring Scott and Carlyle together, did not appear in the paper as originally published in *Macmillan*, but are an insertion into the present reprint made possible by the information furnished by the two recent publications named. I did, indeed, give an outline sketch of some such affair as it had hung in my memory from talk either with Carlyle himself or with his brother Dr. John Carlyle. But the sketch was hazy, and I now find that it was inaccurate in some points.—Scott and Carlyle, I may here add, *were* once together in the same room in Edinburgh in a semi-private way. The fact has been communicated to me by Mr. David Douglas, the editor of Scott's Journal, who had it from Dr. David Aitken, already mentioned in this paper as an intimate friend of Carlyle's in the Comely Bank days. The scene of the meeting was the shop of Mr. Tait, the publisher, then in an upper floor in Hanover Street. Carlyle and Mr. Aitken, who had been walking in Princes Street, turned aside for a call at Mr. Tait's. While they were there and talking with Mr. Tait, Scott came in,—well known to both by sight. "Mr. Tait, have you got a copy "of Horace at hand? I want to make a quotation," were Scott's words on entering. The book having been brought,—a handsome quarto, Dr. Aitken remembered,—Scott sat down with it in his lap, and began to turn over the leaves, Carlyle and Mr. Aitken standing a little way off meanwhile, and Carlyle continuing his talk with Mr. Tait. Soon, as if attracted by the voice or by something said, Scott began to look up, the volume still resting in his lap. Several times he raised his eyes in the same fashion from the book to the two strangers, or to the one who was talking. The expression, as Dr. Aitken interpreted it in recollection, was as if he were saying to himself: "He is a kenspeckle-looking chiel that; I wonder who he is."—The date of this encounter I do not know. If it was *after* the affair of the Goethe medals and the unanswered letters (and that is not impossible if we suppose some occasion for a brief visit from Craigenputtock to Edinburgh in 1829 or 1830), one can imagine with what studious *aloofness* from his great senior Carlyle would comport himself in the accidental interview.

ably with the abortive issue of Goethe's attempt to introduce him to Sir Walter Scott, is of such importance otherwise in his biography that a word or two as to the causes and circumstances may not be superflous.

Carlyle's later memories of the eighteen months, or more strictly nineteen, spent in Comely Bank, are summed up by him in the *Reminiscences* in one doleful sentence. "Comely Bank," he says, "except for one "darling soul, whose heavenly nobleness, then as ever "afterwards, shone on me, and should have made the "place bright (ah me, ah me! I only now know how "noble she was!), was a gloomy intricate abode to me, "and in retrospect has little or nothing of pleasant "but her." So far as this is not a picture tinged, like all the rest of his life, by the final darkness in which it was painted, and to be corrected by the facts as they are otherwise ascertained, the reference may be to the causes which made him suddenly give up his Comely Bank house and remove himself again from Edinburgh. These, there can be no doubt, were economical perplexities. Thrift, frugality, abhorrence from debt or extravagance, was always one of Carlyle's characteristics; and he had found the expenses of married life in Edinburgh beyond his means. On this point some light can be thrown by information from himself, and an annexed calculation.

He told me once of a ride of his into Dundee, in the dusk of evening, with £300 in his pocket, all he had in the world, and of a certain nervousness that came over him, in consequence of the disturbed state of the times and the roughness of the neighbourhood, lest he should be attacked and robbed. The story had no special significance for me at the moment, save that I

wondered what Carlyle could have been doing so far north out of his usual track as Dundee. It seems to me now, however, that the date must have been the spring of 1824, when he parted with the Buller family at Kinnaird House, on his way southwards, to recruit himself, if possible, for meeting them again in London and there resuming the tutorship. Dundee or Perth would then be a likely station on his southward journey; and he had been in the receipt by this time of two years of his salary from the Bullers. On that supposition, remembering that his intermediate receipts before his marriage and settlement in Edinburgh had been £180 for his *Wilhelm Meister*, together with something further of the Buller salary for resumption of duty in London,—but that there had been expenses for his nine months in London and Birmingham, some loss in the year's farming speculation at Hoddam Hill, and the necessary costs of his removal and marriage, and of furnishing the house in Comely Bank,—we may fairly conclude that he cannot have begun housekeeping in October in 1826 with more than a clear £100 or so. His literary earnings in the next eighteen months, if the whole of his remuneration for the *German Romance* fell in then, may have been about £300 for that work, together with about £150 for his four articles in the *Edinburgh* and the *Foreign Review*. Compute the expense of the Comely Bank household, rent included, as necessarily not less than about £300 a year; and it will be seen that, in the beginning of 1828, Carlyle may well have felt that if he remained in Edinburgh he was in danger of running aground.

He had been anxious, in fact, to obtain some post of fixed and certain income that would relieve him from precarious dependence on the press. Two such chances

had offered themselves. The new "University of London" (now "University College, London") had been founded in 1826; and in the course of 1827 the authorities of the new institution had been looking about for professors, in view of the opening of the classes for teaching in October 1828. Carlyle had thought that the Professorship of English Literature would suit him and that he would suit it, and had hoped that Jeffrey's influence with Brougham might secure him the post. Then, while that matter was still pending, there was the still more desirable chance of the succession to Dr. Chalmers in the Moral Philosophy Professorship at St. Andrews. It was known in January 1828 that Dr. Chalmers was to be removed to Edinburgh; candidates were already in the field for the succession, the gift of which was with the Professors of St. Andrews; and Carlyle is found in that month making very energetic exertions as one of them. A letter of his to Procter in London is extant, dated the 17th of that month, explaining the circumstances, informing Procter that Jeffrey is his mainstay in the business, and that he may "also reckon on the warm support of Wilson, Leslie, Brewster, and other men of mark," and requesting a testimonial from Procter and one from Mr. Basil Montagu.[1]

[1] From the *Correspondence between Goethe and Carlyle*, edited by Mr. Charles Eliot Norton, we learn that Carlyle had, on the same day on which he wrote this letter to Procter, written to Goethe soliciting a testimonial from *him* for the same occasion. The testimonial was sent from Weimar, but not till the 14th of March; and it came too late to be of use. A copy of the original German, with an English translation, is printed in Mr. Norton's volume. It is a document of five pages, and perhaps the most unbusiness-like thing ever sent in the shape of a testimonial on behalf of a candidate for a Scottish Professorship. It begins thus:—"True conviction springs from the heart; the Soul, the real "seat of the Conscience, judges concerning what may be permitted and "what may not be permitted far more surely than the Understanding,

Both projects having failed, and the certainty having come that he must depend still on his earnings by literature, his resolution was taken. Away in his native Dumfriesshire, but in a much more wild and solitary part of it than his previous residences of Mainhill, Hoddam Hill, and Scotsbrig, was his wife's little property of Craigenputtock, worth from £200 to £250 a year. It was not in his wife's possession as yet,—her mother, Mrs. Welsh, having a life-interest in it; but, besides the farm-house upon it, occupied by the

" which will see into and determine many things without hitting the right " mark. A well-disposed and self-observant man, wishing to respect " himself and to live at peace with himself, and yet conscious of many " an imperfection perplexing his inner life, and grieved by many a fault " compromising him in the eyes of others, whereby he finds himself dis- " turbed and opposed from within and from without, will seek by all " methods to free himself from such impediments." Then follow two paragraphs of continued remarks on the intellectual or literary life in general; after which the testimonial becomes more specific, thus:—" It " may now without arrogance be asserted that German Literature has " effected much for humanity in this respect,—that a moral-psychological " tendency pervades it, introducing not ascetic timidity, but free culture " in accordance with nature, and a cheerful obedience to law; and there- " fore I have observed with pleasure Mr. Carlyle's admirably profound " study of this Literature, and I have noticed with sympathy how he " has not only been able to discover the beautiful and human, the good " and great, in us, but has also contributed what was his own, and has " endowed us with the treasures of his genius. It must be granted that " he has a clear judgment as to our Æsthetic and Ethic writers, and, at " the same time, his own way of looking at them, which proves that he " rests on an original foundation and has the power to develop in him- " self the essentials of what is good and beautiful. In this sense, I may " well regard him as a man who would fill a Chair of Moral Philosophy " with single-heartedness, with purity, effect, and influence, enlightening " the youth entrusted to him as to their real duties, in accordance with " his disciplined thought, his natural gifts, and his acquired knowledge, " aiming at leading and urging their minds to moral activity, and thereby " steadily guiding them towards a religious completeness."—When one imagines the probable effects on the minds of the St. Andrews Principal and Professors of 1828 of such a testimonial from the German sage, known to them so dimly, and perhaps in ways that made them suspicious of him, one's impression is that, if they had been thinking of appointing Carlyle, the presentation of this testimonial would have been likely to stop them. Never having been presented, it can have done no harm.

farmer who rented it, there was another and superior house, the humble mansion-house of the property, with sufficient appurtenances of garden, stabling, etc. Why not remove thither? One could live there at half the cost of living in Edinburgh, and yet have excellent milk, poultry, eggs, etc., of one's own, a horse to ride on, and healthy moors to scamper over! Jeffrey and others thought Carlyle mad in making such a proposal; but late in May 1828, as we have seen, it was carried into effect.

Here, then, in Carlyle's thirty-third year, his Edinburgh life properly ends, and there begins that extraordinary Craigenputtock period of six years, the literary products of which were five more articles for the *Edinburgh Review*, six more for the *Foreign Review*, three articles for the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, one for the *Westminster Review*, about a score of contributions of various lengths to *Fraser's Magazine*, several little papers elsewhere, and, above all, the *Sartor Resartus*. There were, indeed, two considerable breaks in the six years of Craigenputtock hermitship. One was that second visit to London, from August 1831 to April 1832, in which he heard of his father's death, and in which, while endeavouring to get his *Sartor Resartus* published in book-form, he added Leigh Hunt, young John Stuart Mill, and others, to the number of his London acquaintances. The other was in the winter of 1832-33, when he and his wife were again in Edinburgh for some months, renewing old ties. That winter in Edinburgh, however,—just after the death of Scott, and some months after

the death of Goethe,—furnishes nothing essentially new in the way of incident. Then, in the summer of 1834, when Carlyle was in his thirty-ninth year, and his *Sartor Resartus* was appearing at last by instalments in *Fraser's Magazine*, there was the great final migration to London, beginning the forty-six years of Carlyle's life that were to be associated for ever with No. 5 (now No. 24) Cheyne Row, Chelsea. During those forty-six years there were, of course, frequent trips to Scotland, with chance returns for a few days to Edinburgh. Most memorable of all was the visit to Edinburgh in April 1866, for his installation in the Rectorship of Edinburgh University. Of that visit, perhaps the crowning glory of his old age, and reconnecting him so conspicuously with Edinburgh at the last, but saddened for him so fatally by the death of his wife in his absence, I have not a few intimate recollections; as also of those later, almost furtive, visits now and again in his declining autumns, to his eightieth year and beyond, when his real purpose was pilgrimage to his wife's grave in Haddington Church, and he would saunter, or almost shuffle, through the Edinburgh streets as a bowed-down alien, disconsolate at heart, and evading recognition. Any such recollections may be reserved. All that is properly the Edinburgh Life of Carlyle has been described here.

CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE[1]

To as late as the winter of 1850-51 there was to be seen occasionally in the streets of Edinburgh an old gentleman, very peculiarly attired in a faded surtout of utterly antique fashion, with a large and bulging cravat round his throat, the lower curls of a light-brown wig visible between his hat and his smooth and still ruddy cheeks, pumps on his thread-stockinged feet instead of shoes or boots, and in his hand a green silk umbrella. This, you were told, if you did not know it already, was Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. The mere name probably conveyed some information to you; and on a little inquiry you could learn more. For nearly forty years, you could learn, he had been one of the notabilities of Edinburgh: resident since about 1843 in his present house, No. 28 Drummond Place, where he lived in a recluse manner, with a wonderful museum of antiquities and artistic curiosities about him; but remembered for his more active connection with Edinburgh society in that prior period, between 1813 and 1840, when his house had been in No. 93 Princes Street.

It was mainly in this Princes Street portion of

[1] Review, in *The Scots Observer* (now *The National Observer*), 15th December 1888, of "*Letters from and to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq.* Edited by Alexander Allardyce. With a Memoir by the Rev. W. K. R. Bedford. In two volumes. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons."

Kirkpatrick Sharpe's Edinburgh life, bringing him from the thirty-third year of his age to the sixtieth, that he had made his reputation. A strange and mixed reputation it was. A zealot in Scottish antiquities and editor of some Scottish historical books, an occasional scribbler also in other and semi-private ways on his own account, a dilettante in art and collector of pictures and engravings, a facile master of the pencil in portrait and whimsical caricature, a Tory of the most pronounced old type and hater of everything Whiggish in the past or the present, he was notorious above all as a Sir Mungo Malagrowther *redivivus*, delighting in scandalous anecdote and reminiscence, and in a habit of cynical sarcasm on all sorts of persons, living or dead. A special distinction of a large segment of this portion of his life, you could not fail to be told, had been his intimacy with Sir Walter Scott. The death of Scott in 1832, removing as it did the one man whose companionship he had always prized most, and whose influence on him had been strongest, had, in fact, turned the rest of his life in Edinburgh into a comparative blank. Still in friendly enough relations, however, with some of the best-known of Scott's survivors in the literary society of Edinburgh, especially Thomas Thomson, David Laing, and Robert Chambers, and admitting to his acquaintance now and then a junior of kindred antiquarian tastes, such as Hill Burton, he had continued to prefer "New Athens," as he liked to call it satirically, to any other home. And so, quitting No. 93 Princes Street in 1840, he had, after a brief intervening habitation somewhere in the Old Town, taken up his final abode, in 1843, as has been said, in No 28 Drummond Place, becoming more and

more of an invalid and a recluse there, till at last he had shrunk into that "lean and slippered pantaloon," or rather that old gentleman in the antique blue surtout and light-brown wig, who is remembered as Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe by most of those now living in Edinburgh that can remember him at all. He was not so very old a gentleman, either; for, when he died in March 1851, he had not quite completed his seventieth year.

The best sketch of Kirkpatrick Sharpe in his prime is that given in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, in the form of an extract from Scott's Diary, under the date of Sunday, the 20th November 1825. It chanced that William Clerk and Kirkpatrick Sharpe had dined with Scott that day in his house in Castle Street; and the Diary, after describing Clerk, thus describes the other:—

"Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe is another very remarkable man. He was bred for a clergyman, but never took orders. He has infinite wit, and a great turn for antiquarian lore, as the publications of *Kirkton*, etc., bear witness. His drawings are the most fanciful and droll imaginable,—a mixture between Hogarth and some of those foreign masters who painted temptations of St. Anthony and other grotesque subjects. As a poet he has not a very strong touch. Strange that his finger-ends can describe so well what he cannot bring out clearly and firmly in words. If he were to make drawing a resource, it might raise him a large income. But, though a lover of antiquities, and therefore of expensive trifles, C. K. S. is too aristocratic to use his art to assist his revenue. He is a very complete genealogist, and has made detections in *Douglas* and other books on pedigree, which our nobles would do well to suppress if they had an opportunity. Strange that a man should be curious after scandal of centuries old! Not but Charles loves it fresh and fresh also; for, being very much a fashionable man, he is always master of the reigning report, and he tells the anecdote with such gusto that there is no helping sympathising with him,—a peculiarity of voice adding not a little to the general effect. My idea is that C. K. S., with his oddities, tastes, satire, and high aristocratic feelings, resembles Horace Walpole; perhaps in his person also in a general way."

This description, which C. K. S. must have himself read on its first appearance in *Lockhart*,[1] had to serve as a sufficient account of him for the general public so long as he lived, except in so far as it might be filled up by impressions from his own writings. After his death there were obituary sketches of him, of course, in the Edinburgh newspapers; and he figured posthumously, under the thin disguise of "Fitzpatrick Smart, Esq.," as one of the typical Edinburgh bibliomaniacs so cleverly described by Hill Burton in his *Book-Hunter*, published in 1862. Not till 1869, however, was there any adequate commemoration of him. In that year there was published by Messrs. Blackwood a sumptuous large quarto entitled *Etchings by Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, with Photographs from Original Drawings, Poetical and Prose Fragments, and a Prefatory Memoir*. The volume sufficed in every respect for those who still felt an interest in Kirkpatrick Sharpe and his memory, save that it contained hardly any representation of his extensive epistolary correspondence. The defect has been amply supplied in the two large new volumes now before us. The *Memoir* which they contain is substantially a reproduction of that in the now scarce volume of 1869; but they consist chiefly of a selection of Kirkpatrick Sharpe's preserved letters, and of letters to him, through the long period of fifty-two years extending from 1798 to 1850. The careful editor, Mr. Allardyce, has erred rather by excess than by defect in his selection. A good many of the letters of Sharpe's

[1] Lockhart, in his quotation from the Diary as here given, omitted a line or two. The complete text may be now read in Mr. Douglas's edition of the entire Diary in 1890.

correspondents which he has thought worth giving might well have been spared. With that exception, however, the editing is admirable; and in the main, the collection is as variously amusing, and here and there as startlingly and laughably odd, as anything of the kind that has been published in Great Britain for many a day.

By far the largest proportion of the letters belong to what has been hitherto the least known period of Kirkpatrick Sharpe's life: to wit, the period preceding his definite settlement of himself in Edinburgh in 1813. From these, together with Mr. Bedford's prefixed *Memoir*, we obtain the following facts:—

Born in 1781, at Hoddam Castle, in Dumfriesshire, the third son of Charles Sharpe, Esq., of Hoddam, and with a pedigree, both on the father's side and on the mother's, of specially marked connections with some of the oldest houses of the Scottish aristocracy, and some of the most memorable events of Scottish history, the boy had grown up to his sixteenth year, one of a large family of well-educated brothers and sisters, imbibing the family tastes, and strongly influenced also by the traditions and legends of the antique family-dwelling itself, and of the adjacent scenery of that old West Border region. Drawing, howsoever learnt, must have been one of his earliest accomplishments; and one of the most interesting memories of his boyhood was that, in consequence of his father's friendly relations with the poet Burns, he himself had seen and spoken with the poet familiarly more than once. It was in the winter after the poet's death that Kirkpatrick Sharpe added to his home education by attending

a class or two in the University of Edinburgh. The intention for the time, however, being that he should become an English clergyman, he was sent, in 1798, at the age of seventeen, to Christ Church, Oxford. Mainly here we see him for the next eight years, taking his B.A. degree in 1802 and his M.A. in 1806, and meanwhile forming intimacies with a select number of his young College and University coevals. Chief among these were Earl Gower, afterwards Duke of Sutherland, Viscount Newtown, afterwards Earl of Lanesborough, Lord Lewisham, afterwards Earl of Dartmouth, the Rev. J. J. Conybeare, afterwards Oxford Professor of Poetry, Mr. R. A. Inglis, afterwards the well-known Sir Robert Inglis, and Elijah B. Impey, son of the famous Indian Chief-Justice Impey. In the society of these, and of other young Oxonians, he seems to have made a strong mark, and to have been greatly liked,—a dandyish young fellow, but with eccentric ways and bookish tastes, a very shrill voice and abundant sarcasm in the use of it, no end of knowledge of art subjects, and an inimitable power of portrait-sketching and caricaturing. Incidents of the same college period at Oxford were some contributions by Sharpe to the *Anti-Jacobin*, and the beginning of his acquaintance with Scott, first by correspondence, and then personally. Through the next seven years, when he was passing out of his twenties into his thirties, we see him, though he still kept up his connection with Oxford and was occasionally in residence there, yet moving about a good deal,—sometimes at Hoddam, sometimes in Edinburgh, sometimes in London, but with frequent visits to the country-houses of his aristocratic friends. His habits of letter-writing were now at their briskest;

and among his correspondents through those seven years, besides the Oxonian friends already mentioned, none of whom forgot him wherever he was, one notes the Margravine of Anspach, and her son, the Hon. Keppel Craven, the Marchioness of Stafford, the Countess of Dalkeith, the Count de Gramont, the Marchioness of Queensberry, Lady Charlotte Campbell (afterwards Lady Charlotte Bury), Miss Campbell of Monzie, and the Duchess of Buccleuch. What ended this desultory life of wandering and fashionable acquaintance-making in England was the death of Kirkpatrick Sharpe's father in 1813. The lairdship of Hoddam having then descended to the eldest son, General Matthew Sharpe,[1] the old Hoddam household was broken up, and Kirkpatrick Sharpe, at the age of thirty-two, began, on an allowance from his brother, that long residence in Edinburgh which has been sketched sufficiently already.

If we were to regard Kirkpatrick Sharpe as a kind of Scottish Horace Walpole, it would not be because his correspondence furnishes, to anything like the same extent as Walpole's, a continuous comment of gossip on what was most central in the history of his time. Even the Edinburgh portion of it will disappoint, if what is looked for in it is a record of the most important occurrences in Edin-

[1] This is the "General Sharpe" from whom Carlyle's father had a lease of his farm of Mainhill from 1815 onwards, and from whom Carlyle himself rented the house and grounds of Hoddam Hill for his one year's experiment of farming-life in 1825-26. See the *Reminiscences* for the story of Carlyle's quarrel, and then his father's also, with their landlord, caused mainly by his "arbitrary high-handed temper, used to a rather prostrate style of obedience, and not finding it here." Both father and son gave up their leases in 1826, the father protesting "We can live without Sharpe and the whole Sharpe creation," and saying he would "rather go to Jerusalem seeking farms, and die without finding one," than remain under such a landlord.

burgh through the time traversed. Some of the most notable persons in the society of Edinburgh, and even in its literary society, between 1813 and 1851, are either barely mentioned or not mentioned at all. The truth is that Kirkpatrick Sharpe moved through the world in a track, or in a series of tracks, determined by a few affinities of his own constitution, which led him sometimes into social companionship, but at other times left him stranded, and at leisure to find amusement in counting over the stray beads of past memories. Hence, though his correspondence does contain a good deal of historical gossip at intervals, its chief interest will be missed by those who read it only for that kind of recompense, and do not also find pleasure in it as a revelation of Kirkpatrick Sharpe himself.

Kirkpatrick Sharpe was, as we have hinted, a born Sir Mungo Malagrowther. From his first youth, whether in consequence or not of some constitutional peculiarity, such as might be supposed to be indicated by his thin and shrill voice,—by the bye, Sir Walter, when he introduces the original Sir Mungo in his *Nigel*, expressly notes that the voice of that original was "high-pitched and querulous,"—the lad of elegant accomplishments from Hoddam Castle was marked by a disposition to snarl at things, express shrill and sarcastic views of things, ventilate the absurdest little momentary animosities. In the very first of his letters, which is of date November 1798, and announces to his mother his entry into Christ Church College, his description of the young men of the college he has yet seen is that they "are all ugly, conceited, and putting " themselves in postures like Mr. Don, and have the " worst legs I ever beheld, crooked thirty different ways,

"east, west, north, south, that it is a very shame to be "seen"; and in a later letter the Rev. Dr. Cyril Jackson, the head of the college, is described as "an inspired swine." These irreverences and causticities, characteristic from the first of the conversation and the letters of a young fellow of indubitable natural talent otherwise, and of gentlemanly tastes and belongings, must, in fact, have been one cause of that zest for his society when it could be had, and for continued epistolary intercourse at other times, which was felt by so many of his college comrades of the most aristocratic set, and communicated by them to the seniors of their families. In English country-houses, and among great ladies, what more privileged person than the weak-voiced young Kirkpatrick Sharpe, with his witty cynicisms and budget of queer stories? And so to the end, with only the difference made by change of residence back to Scotland, increasing age, and increasing carelessness in dress,—always a privileged person, just because he was recognised as so amusing a Malagrowther. Here, from the abundance in the volumes before us, are a few of his characteristic Malagrowtherisms, arranged in the chronological order of their subjects:—

Character of the Countess of Mar, his own ancestress.—"Her good qualities were not proportioned, as is generally the case, to her rank. She basked all her life in the beams of royalty, with a pension from the Crown, and yet cultivated the Kirk, and hounded out her whelps to bark and bite in favour of the Solemn League and Covenant."

Milton.—"I think Milton's *Paradise Lost* a heap of blasphemy and obscenity, with, certainly, numberless poetical beauties. Milton was a Whig, and in my mind an Atheist. I am persuaded his poem was composed to apologise for the Devil, who certainly was the first Whig on record."

Mrs. Siddons.—"I met Mrs. Siddons at dinner one day, just before the death of her spouse,—'twas at Walter Scott's,—and you cannot imagine how it annoyed me to behold Belvidera guzzle

boiled beef and mustard, swill streams of porter, cram up her nose with handfuls of snuff, and laugh till she made the whole room shake again."

Madame de Stäel.—"Her face was that of a blackamoor attempted to be washed white. She wore a wig like a bunch of withered heather, and over that a turban which looked as if it had been put on in the dark; a short neck, and shoulders rising so much behind that they almost amounted to a hump. With all this ugliness all the airs of a beauty,—for ever tormenting her shawl into new draperies, and distorting her fingers as you see them in the ridiculous French portraits by Mignard and his followers."

Queen Caroline.—"Her eyes projected, like those of the royal family. She made her head large by wearing an immense wig; she also painted her eyebrows, which gave her face a strange, fierce look. Her skin,—and she showed a great deal,—was very red. She wore very high-heeled shoes, so that she bent forward when she stood or walked: her feet and ankles were dreadful."

Shelley.—"We have lately had a literary sun shine forth upon us here [at Oxford], before whom our former luminaries must hide their diminished heads,—a Mr. Shelley, of University College, who lives upon arsenic, aquafortis, half-an-hour's sleep in the night, and is desperately in love with the memory of Margaret Nicholson."

The Rev. Dr. M'Crie.—"The villainous biographer of John Knox." "That villain, Dr. M'Crie."

The Rev. H. Philpotts (*afterwards Bishop of Exeter*).—"A hideous fellow of the name of Fillpot."

Sir Walter Scott:—(1) *First Sight of Scott at Oxford in* 1803.—"The Border Minstrel paid me a visit some time since on his way to town, and I very courteously invited him to breakfast. He is dreadfully lame, and much too *poetical*. He spouts without mercy, and pays compliments so high-flown that my self-conceit, though a tolerable good shot, could not even wing one of them." (2) *Opinion of the Waverley Novels in* 1839, *seven years after Scott's death.*—"As to Sir Walter's harmless *romances*,—not harmless, however, as to bad English,—they contain *nothing*: pictures of manners that never were, are, or will be, besides ten thousand blunders as to chronology, costume, etc. etc., which must mislead the million who admire such captivating comfits."

Rachel and Jenny Lind.—"I have seen and heard Misses Rachel and J. Lind. The Jewess has a good voice,—far inferior, however, to that of Mrs. Siddons,—but an ungraceful and often vulgar action. As to Miss Jenny, she sings very prettily; but her highest note is a downright squall, and the buzz like a bee she can make (I have heard boys in Annandale do something like it) is a trick,—not music."

These are specimens of what may be called the Malagrowtherism of Kirkpatrick Sharpe's disposition, —his readiness to snarl and snap at everything; but they leave unrepresented the two special forms of his Malagrowtherism which strike one most constantly and startlingly in his correspondence. Like Swift, one of his constitutional resemblances to whom was an extreme personal fastidiousness,—an extreme sensitiveness to anything about himself that was offensive to eye, ear, or nostril,—he tended, in a most inordinate degree, in his writings and letters, as if by revenge against this constitutional nicety, to descriptions and imaginations of the physically nasty; and, like Swift also, and probably from some similar radical cause, he tended, in a most inordinate degree, to sexual allusions, and to all scandals and speculations of the sexual order. Illustrations will not be expected here, but will be found in sufficient number in the volumes which Mr. Allardyce has edited. Mr. Allardyce has been a bold editor; for there are in the volumes passages of both the specified kinds that verge on the bounds of what many people now-a-days might regard as the unpublishable. Some of these passages, it is curious to observe, occur in letters to Sharpe's lady-correspondents; one or two of whom, it is also curious to remark, do not seem at all discomposed, but even,—those were the days of the Regency!—reciprocate with due elegance. The worst of the matter is that poor Sir Walter himself, honest man! does not escape uninvolved. In one or two frank moments, knowing his friend's tastes, he had sent him communications which he thought would suit them; and lo! these now in printed black and white! Hurrah for old Peveril all the same! What can ever smirch *him?*

It would be wrong to leave our readers with the impression that Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe was nothing more than a Sir Mungo Malagrowther of the first half of the present century. At the back of his Malagrowtherism, as appears from plenty of testimony in these volumes, there was much gentlemanly courtesy, a good deal of kindliness and willingness to oblige, a highly cultivated critical judgment in minute matters of art and literature, a sensitiveness to whatever of the fine and poetical in Scottish tradition he could discern amid the gross and scandalous, and, most especially, a real sense of humour. In this last particular his fondness for little scraps of whimsical or nonsensical verse may be taken as a sure sign. There must have been some heart of intrinsic fun in the man who could go about in the streets, or sit alone in his room, repeating to himself, as we know he did, such scraps as these :—

"Yours till death, till death doth come,
And shut me up in the cold *tum*."

"What is impossible can't be,
And never, never comes to pass."

"Hey, the haggis o' Dunbar,
Fatharalinkum feedle;
Mony better, few waur,
Fatharalinkum feedle."

Above all, we must remember how many attached friends Kirkpatrick Sharpe had drawn around him in the course of his life, and how all that survived of the earliest of these kept up their liking for him, and an affectionate intercourse with him, to the last. In September 1831, when the dying Scott was departing on his final journey to the Mediterranean in quest of health, almost the last friend he wrote to was his "Dear Charles"; and the letter contained these words

—"I should like to have shaken hands with you, as "there are few I regret so much to part with. But it "will not be. I will keep my eyes dry if possible, and "therefore content myself with bidding you a long, "perhaps an eternal, farewell." That, surely, is a testimony by itself. All in all, then, need we wonder at the rumour that there are some persons in Edinburgh now so peculiarly tempered, or so ill-satisfied with their present mercies, that they would be willing to exchange any three or four of those whom they are pleased to characterise as the more insipid present celebrities of the town for the re-apparition among us of that crabbed old gentleman who was to be seen forty years ago in the Edinburgh streets, with his light-brown wig, faded blue surtout, ribbon-tied pumps, and green silk umbrella?

JOHN HILL BURTON[1]

Dr. Hill Burton used to be a little annoyed by the praises bestowed on him for his *Book-Hunter*. He had written books far more laborious and important, he thought; and why should the public, why should his own friends even, be always paying him such special compliments on account of a mere piece of literary bye-play?

The feeling was natural on Dr. Burton's part; and it is certainly not to this casual production of his, published originally in 1862, that one would now point as the most solid exhibition of his powers. Yet the public were not wrong in their extraordinary fondness for *The Book-Hunter*. Not only was it a book of deliciously amusing matter, such as one prays for on a dull evening or a rainy day; but it was pervaded, in an unusual degree, by the flavour of the author's own peculiar character. If not the most valuable of Dr. Burton's writings, it is the most thoroughly Burtonian. Hence a real propriety in the form of the present republication. If any one of Dr. Burton's books was to be converted, by the care of his publishers, into a memorial of himself,

[1] From *The Scotsman* of 18th November 1882; where it appeared as a review of "*The Book-Hunter*, etc. By John Hill Burton, D.C.L., LL.D., Author of *A History of Scotland*, *The Scot Abroad*, *The Reign of Queen Anne*, etc. A New Edition: with a Memoir of the Author. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London."

and set forth, therefore, in all the beauties of quarto size, thick ribbed paper, wide margins, and gilt binding, and with the accompaniments of a portrait, illustrative vignettes, and a prefixed biography, which could it be but *The Book-Hunter*? Messrs. Blackwood have done well in perceiving this, and in making reaccessible such a famous book about books, unfortunately so long out of print, in a new edition devised so expressly, in the first place, for book-lovers of very æsthetic tastes and correspondingly superior purses.

No need at this time of day to revert to the book itself for description of the richly humorous variety of its contents, or for specification of the parts that are most fascinating and memorable. No need either to point out the errors into which the author sometimes fell in his hurry, and some of which remain in the present text, — as, for example, the extraordinary blunder of making Gilbert Rule "the founder and first Principal of the University of Edinburgh." We prefer attending to what is really the most important, as well as the most charming, feature of distinction between this new edition of *The Book-Hunter* and the older and smaller editions. Biographic sketches of Dr. Burton, some of them in the shape of obituary notices, have already made the public acquainted with the main facts of his life; but there has been no such full, intimate, or interesting account of him as that furnished in the "Memoir of the Author" which opens the present volume, and bears the signature of his widow, "Katharine Burton." Consisting of no fewer than 104 pages, and sketching the whole life with sufficient continuity, and with a pleasant abundance of personal

detail, it is exactly the kind of biographical introduction that one would desire to see prefixed to the most characteristic work, or to the collected works, of any deceased author. We should have been grateful for so much information about Dr. Burton and his habits in whatever form it had been communicated; but the form itself deserves praise. Although there has been evidence of Mrs. Burton's literary ability and skill in former writings of hers, in none of them has she been more successful than in this. The style is easy; and the narrative is managed throughout with an admirable combination of fidelity to fact, dutiful affection for the subject, and artistic perception of what is historically significant, or racy, or picturesque. One is struck, also, by the frank candour of the writer, her abstinence from exaggeration, her resolution that Dr. Burton should be seen in her pages exactly as he was. In two or three passages this honesty of the writer, so rare in biographies by relatives, comes upon the reader with the effect of a surprise.

In the first portion of the Memoir we are with young Burton in Aberdeen, where he was born in 1809, and where he mainly resided till 1830. We see him in his boyhood and early youth, growing up hardily among the quaint and old-fashioned domesticities of his maternal relatives, the Patons of Grandholm, or moving about between the two almost contiguous towns, the main Aberdeen and the smaller Old Aberdeen, that share the mouths of the Dee and the Don. By-the-bye, why does Mrs. Burton lavish all her affection on Old Aberdeen, calling it "a sweet, still, little place," and dilating on the charms of its college and cathedral and antique streets, while she has nothing more to say for New

Aberdeen than that it is "a highly prosperous commercial city, as utterly devoid of beauty or interest as any city under the sun"? About Old Aberdeen all will agree with her; but who that really knows the Granite City will agree with her about the New? Is it nothing to be able to walk along the whole length of her noble Union Street, whether on fair summer mornings, when the sun is shining, or again in the frosty winter nights, when the eye is held by the undulating perspective of the lamps, and the very houses glitter keenly in the star-light, and the aurora borealis is seen dancing at its best in the northward sky over the chasm from Union Bridge? Is it nothing to saunter down by the bustling quays and ship-yards, and thence to the extreme of the harbour, where the great out-jutting pier of stonework commands the miles of breakers and of sandy beach to the left, and spikes the wrath of the German Ocean?

To young Burton, at all events, these and other sights and experiences of his native city were by no means nothing. Familiar, like all other Aberdonians, with the quiet little old town of the Don, he was a nursling more peculiarly of the new town of the Dee, —historically the older town, after all. It was at the Grammar School of New Aberdeen that he received his first instruction in Latin; and, when he passed to the University, it was not to King's College in Old Aberdeen, but to the amorphous hulk of a building, off the Broadgate, in the New Town, then famous as Marischal College and University, where Dugald Dalgetty had been educated long before him. For a while, indeed, it seemed as if Burton was to be a denizen of New Aberdeen all his days. Hardly had

he left the University when he was apprenticed to an Aberdeen writer, and began the drudgery of office-work, with a view to being an Aberdeen writer himself. Two passions, however, had already been developed in him, which made the prospect of such a life unendurably irksome. One was a passion for rambling about the country. To the last Dr. Burton was an indefatigable pedestrian, thinking nothing of a walk of fifty or even sixty miles in a day, over any tract of country and in any kind of weather; and the habit, Mrs. Burton tells us, and proves by letters, had been formed in his boyhood. Nothing more common with him then than to set off, in the holiday season, with a pound in his pocket, accomplish some incredible distance on that sum in the Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, or Morayshire Highlands, and reappear, draggled and footworn, when the sum was spent. His other passion was for literature. Letter-writing he disliked, and avoided as much as he could; but for every other purpose he had always a pen in his hand. Heaps of early manuscript of his, Mrs. Burton informs us, are yet extant, conspicuously weak in the spelling, but showing an extraordinary versatility of taste in the matter. He wrote verse as well as prose, drama as well as narrative, but had a special propensity to terrific prose-stories of the blood and murder sort. There were newspapers in Aberdeen, and even a magazine, at that date; and, where editors were so good-natured and not over-burdened, it was not difficult for a clever young scribbler to get a percentage of his writings into print. The Memoir does not give us particulars; but Aberdonian legend still preserves the memory of those old days when young Burton, young Joseph Robertson, young Spalding,

and others, began their literary lives together, and had no higher ambition as yet than astonishing the Devanha and being read in the Gallowgate.

Released, by happy chance, from his detested Aberdeen writership, Burton came to Edinburgh in November 1830, at the age of one-and-twenty, and was able, by passing some forms of examination, which seem to have been easier and more rapid than the corresponding forms now, to qualify himself at once for the Scottish Bar. He was called in 1831; and from that date he was a citizen of Edinburgh, never leaving it save for one of his country rambles, or for an occasional visit to London or the Continent. From that date, too, his membership of the Bar leading to little or no practice, but only to more and more distinct recognition of him as one of the Whig politicians of the Parliament House, literature was his avowed profession.

The fifty years of Burton's Edinburgh life are sketched for us in Mrs. Burton's Memoir with chronological and topographical precision. The substance is as follows:—

The thirteen years of his continued bachelorship, from 1831 to 1844, when he was domiciled with his mother and sister, first in Warriston Crescent, and then in Howard Place, with a little summer cottage at Brunstane, were a period of extraordinary and most varied literary industry, chiefly anonymous. He wrote for newspapers and reviews; he wrote schoolbooks and other compilations; he wrote no one knows what or how much. "Dr. Burton's whole resources at this time," we are informed, "were derived from his pen."

It was the same during the five years of his first

married life, from 1844 to 1849, when he and his wife resided in Scotland Street, and then in Royal Crescent, his mother and sister having taken up house by themselves,—not at Brunstane, which was given up about this time,—but at Liberton Bank. It was during those five years, however, that, while still engaged in a great amount of miscellaneous hack-work, he emerged into independent authorship in his *Life and Correspondence of David Hume*, his *Lives of Lord Lovat and Duncan Forbes of Culloden*, his *Benthamiana*, and his *Political and Social Economy*, — the last written for the Messrs. Chambers. This was the time, too, of his fullest relish for general companionship, his most frequent appearances at Edinburgh dinner tables, and perhaps his highest reputation for humorous sociability and powers of table talk.

The sad death of his wife in 1849, leaving him a widower in his fortieth year, with three young daughters, produced a change in that respect from which he never quite recovered. He was all but shattered by the blow, and went about for a time broken-hearted, shunning all ordinary society, and finding relief only in aimless walks by night and day, and in strenuous and solitary work. Through the whole of his widowerhood, in fact, he remained very much of a recluse, living laboriously with his children and his books, first in Castle Street and then in Ann Street, and having intercourse only with a few intimates : such as Joseph Robertson, John Ritchie, Alexander Russel and other *Scotsman* friends, and Professor Cosmo Innes. With the last of these, especially, he was in the habit of taking long Saturday and Sunday walks ; which ended generally in his dining

with the Innes family, the one guest at their table in Inverleith Row, of a Saturday or Sunday evening. This, we believe, was the time of the beginning of his important connection with *Blackwood's Magazine*, as it was certainly of the publication of his *Narratives from Criminal Trials in Scotland*, his *Treatise of the Law of Bankruptcy in Scotland*, and his *History of Scotland from the Revolution to the Extinction of the last Jacobite Rebellion*. His appointment in 1854 to the Secretaryship of the Scottish Prisons Board, with a salary of £700 a year, made his circumstances easier, and at the same time provided him with that regular occupation in official business for so many hours every day which he thought desirable for any man of letters. The appointment caused him to remove to a largish, semi-rural house in Lauriston Place, backing on the Meadows, the site of which is now occupied by the Simpson Memorial Hospital.

In August 1855 he married his second wife,—the daughter of his friend Cosmo Innes, and writer of the present Memoir. As is natural, she devotes a considerable proportion of the Memoir to recollections of the subsequent six-and-twenty years of her husband's life. Till March 1861 they remained in Lauriston Place,—where three more children were born to Dr. Burton, a son and two daughters; but in that month they entered on the tenancy of Craighouse, a quaint old-sixteenth century fortalice, near the Braid Hills, and two miles out of Edinburgh, on which they had set their hearts, partly for the charm of its own ruinous picturesqueness, partly for its historical associations with the reigns of Queen Mary and James VI., and partly on account of the singular beauty of the views in its vicinity. Here, having reduced the ruin into

habitable and pleasant order, they lived till 1878, on the verge of the Edinburgh world, and sufficiently close to it for the daily business purposes of such an inveterate pedestrian as Burton, but still so much out of it that the recluse evening habits into which he had settled could be interrupted only when he chose, whether by the reception of a friend or two now and then under his own roof, or by the still rarer accident of a visit to some friend's house in town.

Incidents of those seventeen years at Craighouse, besides the birth of his seventh child and youngest son, were his honorary graduation as LL.D. by the University of Edinburgh, his election to the membership of the Athenæum Club in London, his appointment to the dignity of the Historiographership-Royal for Scotland, and his honorary graduation as D.C.L. by the University of Oxford. These honours were successive acknowledgments of that growth of his literary reputation which had attended the appearance of such results of his continued industry for Blackwood as his *Book-Hunter* and his *Scot Abroad*, but, above all, the publication of his completed *History of Scotland* in eight volumes. Hardly had this last, his largest, work been finished when he projected his *History of the Reign of Queen Anne*.

That work, however, prosecuted slowly and intermittently, and requiring visits to London and to the Continent for its preparation, was not concluded in Craighouse, but in another country house, called Morton House, at the foot of the Pentland Hills, to which he was reluctantly obliged to remove in 1878, when a new speculation affecting the future property of Craighouse and its neighbourhood dispossessed him from that much-loved home. The

last three years of his life, marked by the publication of his *History of the Reign of Queen Anne*, in three volumes, and then, as if in final farewell to authorship of any kind, by the sale of his library, were spent in this Morton House; and here he died in 1881. As he had by that time retired from his official duties in connection with the Prisons Board, and had few business occasions for being in Edinburgh, he was even more of a recluse at Morton than he had been before. Many of the younger Edinburgh generation, however, that knew nothing of him personally in his prime, must have a vivid recollection of casual glimpses of him in those still recent years, when his stooping, eccentric figure, very untidily dressed, and with the most battered and back-hanging of hats, would be seen pushing rapidly along Princes Street, or some other thoroughfare, with a look that seemed to convey the decided intimation: "Don't stop me; I care for none of you." But, if you did have a meeting with Burton in circumstances that made colloquy possible, he was the most kindly of men in his rough and unsophisticated way, with a quantity of the queerest and most entertaining old lore, and no end of good Scottish stories.

For the filling-out of this mere chronological scheme with the particulars that make it lively and interesting, the reader must go to Mrs. Burton's own pages. She has judiciously interwoven her own narrative with a selection from the simple and chatty letters which, with all his dislike of letter-writing, he did punctually send to his family whenever he chanced to be absent from them. Of her account of his domestic habits, and of the singular honesty which tempers, as we have said, her affectionate

estimate of his character all-in-all, the following sentences, strung together from different parts of the Memoir, will be a sufficient specimen here :—

"His defect in conversation was that he was a bad listener. His own part was well sustained. His enormous store of varied information poured forth naturally and easily, and was interspersed with a wonderful stock of lively anecdotes and jokes. But he always lacked that greatest power of the conversationalist, the subtle ready sympathy which draws forth the best powers of others. He was invaluable at a dull dinner-table, furnishing the whole *frais de la conversation* himself. . . . His mode of life at that time [during his residence at Lauriston Place and at Craighouse] was to repair to the office of the Prison Board, in George Street, about eleven. He remained there till four, and made it a matter of conscience neither to do any extra-official writing nor to receive visits during those hours. . . . Returning from his office to dinner at five, he would, after dinner, retire to the library for twenty minutes or half-an-hour's perusal of a novel as mental rest. His taste in novels has been already described. Although he would read only those called exciting, they did not, apparently, excite him, for he read them as slowly as if he was learning them by heart. He would return to the drawing-room to drink a large cup of extremely strong tea, then retire again to the library to commence his day of literary work about eight in the evening. He would read or write without cessation, and without the least appearance of fatigue or excitement, till one or two in the morning. . . . Constitutionally irritable, energetic, and utterly persistent, Dr. Burton did not know what dulness or depression of spirits was. With grief he was indeed acquainted, and while such a feeling lasted it engrossed him; but his spirits were naturally elastic, and both by nature and on principle he discouraged in himself and others any dwelling on the sad or pathetic aspects of life. He has said that the nearest approach he had ever felt to low spirits was when he had finished some great work and had not yet begun another. . . . John Hill Burton can never have been handsome, and he so determinedly neglected his person as to increase its natural defects. His greatest mental defect was an almost entire want of imagination. From this cause the characters of those nearest and dearest to him remained to his life's end a sealed book. . . . Dr. Burton was excessively kind-hearted within the limits placed by this great want. To any sorrow or suffering which he could understand he craved with characteristic impatience to carry immediate relief; and the greatest enjoyment of his life, especially of its later years, was to give pleasure to children, poor people, or the lower animals. Many humble folks will remember the bunches of flowers

he thrust silently into their hands, and the refreshment he never failed to press on their acceptance in his own peculiar manner. He was liberal of money to a fault. He never refused any application even from a street beggar. . . . No printer's devil or other chance messenger failed to receive his sixpence or shilling, besides a comfortable meal. . . . Many of the 'motley crew' along with whom Dr. Burton received his education fell into difficulties in the course of their lives. Application from one of them always met with a prompt response. To send double the amount asked on such occasions was his rule, if money was the object desired. In his earlier life he would also spare no trouble in endeavouring to help these unfortunates to help themselves. As he grew older he was less zealous, probably from being less sanguine of success, in this service."

The illustrations that accompany the Memoir deserve a word. The portrait of Dr. Burton, etched by Mr. W. B. Hole, A.R.S.A., after a photograph, and representing him walking away, with a book in his hand, from an old book-stall near Candlemaker Row, is done to the life, slightly tidied perhaps in the look of the costume, but catching his gait and the keen expression of his eyes and face with wonderful fidelity. Very faithful and pleasing, also, are the vignettes of Craighouse Avenue and Craighouse itself, the view of a nook in the library of Craighouse, and the vignette of Dalmeny Churchyard, where Dr. Burton lies buried, all drawn by his daughter Miss Rose Burton, and engraved by her sister Miss E. P. Burton.

DR. JOHN BROWN OF EDINBURGH[1]

Since the last session of our University, Edinburgh has lost two of her citizens of literary mark. Dr. John Brown died, in his house in Rutland Street, on the 11th of May, in the seventy-second year of his age; and his friend, Dr. William Hanna, died in London on the 24th of the same month, aged seventy-three. They were both buried in Edinburgh. As I had the honour of knowing them both well, I cannot let the present occasion pass without asking you to join with me in remembering them affectionately. I could say much to you of Dr. Hanna, the son-in-law and biographer of Dr. Chalmers. I could dwell on the merits of his *Life* of that great man and of his other well-known works, and on his fine liberality of intellect and the keen and warm geniality of his Scoto-Irish heart. In this place, however, it is naturally of Dr. John Brown that I feel myself entitled to speak at some length. He was, in a sense, during the latter part of his life, peculiarly our Edinburgh man of letters, the man most fondly thought of in that character by many people at a distance. They had begun, long before his death, to call him "The Scottish Charles

[1] From *Macmillan's Magazine* for February 1883. The main portion of the paper was delivered as a lecture in the University of Edinburgh on Tuesday, October 24, 1882; and there are reasons for retaining the familiarity of the lecture form in the reprint.

Lamb"; and the name is applied to him still by English critics.

Born at Biggar in Lanarkshire, in 1810, the son of the Secession minister of that town, and of a family already in the third generation of its remarkable distinction in the Scottish religious world as "The Browns of Haddington," our friend came to Edinburgh in 1822, when he was twelve years old. His father had then removed from Biggar, to assume that pastorate of the Rose Street Secession Church in this city in which, and subsequently in his ministry in the Broughton Place Church, and in his Theological Professorship in connection with the Associate Synod, he attained his celebrity. When I first knew Edinburgh there was no more venerable-looking man in it than this Dr. John Brown of Broughton Place Church. People would turn in the streets to observe his dignified figure as he passed; and strangers who went to hear him preach were struck no less by the beauty of his appearance in the pulpit, the graceful fall of the silver locks round his fine head and sensitive face, than by the Pauline earnestness of his doctrine. At that time, the phrase "Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh," if used in any part of Scotland away from the metropolis, would have been taken as designating this venerable Calvinistic clergyman, and not his son.

The son, meanwhile, it is true, was becoming well enough known within Edinburgh on his own account. Having been educated at the High School and the University, and having chosen the medical profession, and been apprenticed for some time to the famous surgeon, Syme, he had taken his degree of M.D. in 1833, and had then,—with no other previous medical experience out of Edinburgh than a short probation among the

sailors at Chatham,—settled down permanently in Edinburgh for medical practice. From that date, therefore, on to the time when I can draw upon my own first recollections of him,—say about 1846,—there had been two Dr. John Browns in Edinburgh, the father and the son, the theological doctor and the medical doctor. It was the senior or theological doctor, as I have said, that was then still the "Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh" *par excellence*, and the name had not transferred itself to the younger with its new signification. He was then about thirty-six years of age, with some little practice as a physician; and my remembrance of him at that time is of a darkish-haired man, of shorter stature than his father, with fine soft eyes, spirited movement, and very benignant manner, the husband of a singularly beautiful young wife, and greatly liked and sought after in the Edinburgh social circles in which he and she appeared. This was partly from the charm of his vivid temperament and conversation, and partly because of a reputation for literary ability that had been recently gathering round him on account of occasional semi-anonymous articles of his in newspapers and periodicals, chiefly art-criticisms. For the hereditary genius of "The Browns of Haddington" had, in this fourth generation of them, turned itself out of the strictly theological direction, to work in new ways. While Dr. Samuel Brown, a younger cousin of our Dr. John, had been astonishing Edinburgh by his brilliant speculations in Chemistry, Dr. John himself, in the midst of what medical practice came in his way, had been toying with Literature. Toying only it had been at first, and continued to be for a while; but, by degrees,—and especially after 1847, when the editorship of the *North British Review*,

which had been founded in 1844, passed into the hands of his friend Dr. Hanna,—his contributions to periodical literature became more various and frequent. At length, in 1858, when he was forty-eight years of age, and had contributed pretty largely to the periodical named and to others, he came forth openly as an author, by publishing a volume of what he called his *Horæ Subsecivæ*, consisting mainly of medical biographies and other medico-literary papers collected from the said periodicals, but including also his immortal little Scottish idyll called "Rab and His Friends." His father had died in that year, so that thenceforward, if people chose, the designation "Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh" could descend to the son without ambiguity.

And it did so descend. For eleven years before that appearance of the first collection of his *Horæ Subsecivæ*, with "Rab and His Friends" included in it, I had been resident in London, and I remained there for seven years more. During all those eighteen years, therefore, my direct opportunities of cultivating his acquaintance had ceased; and, while I could take note through the press of the growth of his literary reputation, it was only by hearsay at a distance, or by a letter or two that passed between us, or by a glimpse of him now and then when I came north on a visit, that I was kept aware of his Edinburgh doings and circumstances. Not till the end of 1865, when I resumed residence in Edinburgh, were we brought again into close neighbourhood and intercourse. Then, certainly, I found him, at the age of five-and-fifty, as completely and popularly our "Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh" in the new sense as ever his father had been in the old one. His pen had been still busy in

newspapers and periodicals, the subjects ranging away more and more from the medical; another volume of his *Horæ Subsecivæ*, or collected articles, had been published; and some of his papers, selected from that volume or its predecessor, or taken more directly from the manuscript, had been brought out separately, in various forms, under the discerning care of his friend and publisher, Mr. David Douglas, and had been in circulation almost with the rapidity of one of the serial parts of a novel by Dickens. Of both his *Minchmoor* and his *Jeems the Doorkeeper* more than 10,000 copies had been sold; his *Pet Marjorie* had passed the sale of 15,000 copies; and *Rab and His Friends* was already in its 50th thousand.

With all this applause beating in upon him from the reading public, in Scotland, in England, and in America, there he still was in his old Edinburgh surroundings: a widower now for some years, domesticated with his two children, and more solitary in his habits than he had been; but to be seen walking along Princes Street of a forenoon, or sometimes at some hospitable dinner-table of an evening, always the same simple, wise, benevolent, lovable, and much-loved Dr. John. And so for sixteen years more, and to the very end. The sixties crept upon him after the fifties, and the white touch of the first seventies followed, and the vivid darkish-haired Dr. John of my first memory had changed into the bald-headed and spectacled veteran you may see in the later photographs,—the spectacles before his fine eyes if he were looking to the front, but raised over the placid forehead if he were looking downwards at a print or a book. But these changes had come softly, and with a mellowing rather than withering effect; and, as late as last winter, what

veteran was there in our community whose face and presence in any company was more desired or gave greater pleasure? If a stranger of literary tastes visited Edinburgh, about whom did he inquire more curiously, or whom was he more anxious to see, if possible, than Dr. John Brown? We knew, most of us, that his calm face concealed sorrows; we remembered his long widowerhood; we were aware too of the occasional glooms and depressions that withdrew him from common society; but, when he did appear among us, whether in any public gathering or in more private fashion, how uniformly cheerful he was, how bright and sunny! It has been stated, in one obituary notice of him, that his medical practice declined as his literary reputation increased. I doubt the truth of the statement, and imagine that the reverse might be nearer the truth. To the end he loved his profession; to the end he practised it; to the end there were not a few families, in and about Edinburgh, who would have no other medical attendant, if they could help it, than their dear and trusted Dr. John. My impression rather is that he was wrapt up in his profession more and more in his later days, using his pen only for a new trifle now and then as the whim struck him, and content in the main with the continued circulation of his former writings or their re-issue in new shapes. It was on the 12th of April in the present year, or only a month before his death, that he put the last prefatory touch to the first volume of that new edition of his *Horæ Subsecivæ* in three volumes in which his complete literary remains are now accessible.

The title *Horæ Subsecivæ*, borrowed by Dr. John from the title-pages of some old volumes of the minor English literature of the seventeenth century, indicates,

and was intended to indicate, the nature of his writings. They are all "Leisure Hours," little things done at times snatched from business. There are between forty and fifty of them in all, none of them long, and most of them very short. It is vain in his case to repeat the regret, so common in similar cases, that the author did not throw his whole strength into some one or two suitable subjects, and produce one or two important works. By constitution, I believe, no less than by circumstances, Dr. John Brown was unfitted for large and continuous works, and was at home only in short occasional papers. One compensation is the spontaneity of his writings, the sense of immediate throb and impulse in each. Every paper he wrote was, as it were, a moment of himself, and we can read his own character in the collected series.

A considerable proportion of his papers, represented most directly by his *Plain Lectures on Health addressed to Working People*, his little essay entitled *Art and Science*, and his other little essays called *Excursus Ethicus* and *Education through the Senses*, but also by his *Locke and Sydenham* and others of his sketches of eminent physicians, are in a didactic vein. Moreover, they are all mainly didactic on one string. When these papers are read, it is found that they all propound and illustrate one idea, which had taken such strong hold of the author that it may be called one of his characteristics. It is the idea of the distinction or contrast between the speculative, theoretical, or scientific habit of mind, and the practical or active habit. In medical practice and medical education, more particularly, Dr. John Brown thought there had come to be too much attention to mere science, too much faith

in mere increase of knowledge and in exquisiteness of research and apparatus, and too little regard for that solid breadth of mind, that soundness of practical observation and power of decision in emergencies, that instinctive or acquired sagacity, which had been conspicuous among the best of the older physicians. As usual, he has put this idea into the form of humorous apologue :—

A DIALOGUE.

SCENE.—Clinical wards of Royal Infirmary. The Physician and his Clerk *loquuntur.*

John Murdoch, in the clinical ward with thoracic aneurism of the aorta, had at his bedside a liniment of aconite, etc. Under the stress of a paroxysm of pain, he drank it off, and was soon dead.

Physician.—Well, Sir, what about Murdoch? Did you see him alive?

Clerk.—Yes, Sir.

Physician.—Did you feel his pulse?

Clerk.—No, Sir.

Physician.—Did you examine his eyes?

Clerk.—No, Sir.

Physician.—Did you observe any frothing at the mouth and nose?

Clerk.—No, Sir.

Physician.—Did you count his respirations?

Clerk.—No, Sir.

Physician.—Then, Sir, what the d——l *did* you do?

Clerk.—I ran for the stomach-pump.

Dr. John was never tired of inculcating this distinction; it is the backbone of almost all those papers of his that have been just mentioned, and it reappears in others. In his special little essay called *Art and Science* he formulates it thus :—

IN MEDICINE

SCIENCE

Looks to essence and cause.
Is diagnostic.
Has a system.
Is *post-mortem*.
Looks to structure more than function.
Studies the phenomena of poisoning.
Submits to be ignorant of nothing.
Speaks.

ART

Looks to symptoms and occasions.
Is therapeutic and prognostic.
Has a method.
Is *ante-mortem*.
Looks to function more than structure.
Runs for the stomach-pump.
Submits to be ignorant of much.
Acts.

Now, in the particular matter in question, so far as it is here represented, we should, doubtless, all agree with our friend. We should all, for ourselves, in serious illness, infinitely prefer the attendance of any tolerable physician of the therapeutic and prognostic type to that of the ablest of the merely diagnostic type, especially if we thought that the genius of the latter inclined him to a *post-mortem* examination. Hence we may be disposed to think that Dr. John did good service in protesting against the run upon science, ever new science, in the medicine of his day, and trying to hark back the profession to the good old virtues of vigorous rule of thumb. What I detect, however, underneath all his expositions of this possibly salutary idea, and prompting to his reiterations of it, is something deeper. It is a dislike in his own nature to the abstract or theoretical in all matters whatsoever. Dr. John Brown's mind, I should say,

was essentially anti-speculative. His writings abound, of course, with tributes of respect to science and philosophy, and expressions of astonishment and gratitude for their achievements; but it may be observed that the thinkers and philosophers to whom he refers most fondly are chiefly those older magnates, including Bacon, Newton, Locke, and Bishop Butler among the English, whose struggle was over long ago, whose results are an accepted inheritance, and who are now standards of orthodoxy. All later drifts of speculative thought, and especially the latest drifts of his own day, seem to have made him uncomfortable. He actually warns against them as products of what he calls "the lust of innovation." This is a matter of so much consequence in the study of Dr. John Brown's character that it ought not to be passed over lightly.

There can be no doubt that his dislike of the purely speculative spirit, and especially of recent speculation of certain kinds, was rooted in some degree in the fine devoutness of his nature, his unswerving fidelity to his inherited religion. The system of beliefs which had been consecrated for him so dearly and powerfully by the lives and example of his immediate progenitors was still substantially that with which he went through the world himself, though it had been softened in the course of transmission, stripped of its more angular and sectarian features, and converted into a contemplative *Religio Medici*, not unlike that of his old English namesake, the philosopher and physician of Norwich. Like that philosopher, for whom he had all the regard of a felt affinity, he delighted in an *O altitudo!*, craved the refuge of an *O altitudo!* in all the difficulties

of mere reason, and held that in that craving itself there is the sure gleam for the human spirit of the one golden key that unlocks those difficulties. A difference, however, between him and old Browne of Norwich is that he had much less of clear and definite thought, of logical grasp of prior propositions and reasonings, with which to prepare for an *altitudo*, justify it, and prop it up. Take as a specimen a passage relating to that very distinction between Art and Science which he valued so much :—

"It may be thought that I have shown myself, in this parallel and contrast, too much of a partisan of Art as against Science, and the same may be not unfairly said of much of the rest of this volume. It was in a measure on purpose,—the general tendency being counteractive of the purely scientific and positive, or merely informative, current of our day. We need to remind ourselves constantly that this kind of knowledge puffeth up, and that it is something quite else that buildeth up. It has been finely said that Nature is the Art of God, and we may as truly say that all Art,—in the widest sense, as practical and productive,—is His Science. He knows all that goes to the making of everything; for He is Himself, in the strictest sense, the only maker. He knows what made Shakespeare and Newton, Julius Cæsar and Plato, what we know them to have been; and they are His by the same right as the sea is His, and the strength of the hills, for He made them and His hands formed them, as well as the dry land. This making the circle for ever meet, this bringing Omega eternally round to Alpha, is, I think, more and more revealing itself as a great central, personal, regulative truth, and is being carried down more than ever into the recesses of physical research, where Nature is fast telling her long-kept secrets: all her tribes speaking, each in their own tongue, the wonderful works of God,—the sea saying 'It is not in me,' everything giving up any title to anything like substance, beyond being the result of one Supreme Will. The more chemistry, and electrology, and life, are searched into by the keenest and most remorseless experiment, the more do we find ourselves admitting that motive power and force, as manifested to us, is derived, is in its essence immaterial, is direct from Him in whom we live and move, and to whom, in a sense quite peculiar, belongeth power."

This is fine, it is eloquent, it is likeable; but one cannot call it lucid. Indeed, if interpreted literally, it is

incoherent, for the end contradicts the beginning. "Abstain from excess of theory or speculation," it substantially says, "for theory and speculation, when prosecuted to the very utmost, lead to a profound religiousness." This is the only verbal construction of the passage; but it is the very opposite of what was meant.

It is much the same with Dr. John Brown in smaller matters. If he wants a definition or a distinction on any subject, he generally protests first against the desire for definitions and distinctions, maintaining the superiority of healthy practical sense and feeling over mere theory; then he produces, in his own words, some "middle axiom," or passable first-hand notion on the subject, as sufficient for the purpose if anything theoretical is wanted; and then he proceeds to back this up by interesting quotations from favourite and accredited authors. In short, Dr. John Brown lived in an element of the "middle propositions," the accredited axioms, on all subjects, and was impatient of reasoning, novelty of theory, or search for ultimate principles. It is but the same thing in another form,—though it deserves separate statement,—to say that he disliked controversy. He shrank from controversy in all matters, social as well as intellectual; was irritated when it came near him; and kept rather on the conservative side in any new "cause" or "movement" that was exciting his neighbourhood. Perhaps the most marked exception in his writings to this disposition to rest in existing social arrangements, and also to his prevailing dislike of speculation, was his assertion of his unhesitating assent to that extreme development of Adam Smith's doctrines which would abolish the system of state-licensing for particular professions, or at all events for the profession of Medicine. He

advocates this principle more than once in his papers, and he signifies his adherence to it in almost the last words he wrote. "I am more convinced than ever," he says in the prefatory note to the collected edition of his *Horæ Subsecivæ*, "of the futility and worse of the "Licensing System, and think, with Adam Smith, "that a mediciner should be as free to exercise his "gifts as an architect or a mole-catcher. The public "has its own shrewd way of knowing who should "build its house or catch its moles, and it may quite "safely be left to take the same line in choosing its "doctor." This is bold enough, and speculative enough; but the fact is that this acceptance of the principle of absolute *laissez-faire*, or non-interference of the state, or any other authority, in Medicine, or in any analogous art or craft, was facilitated for him by his hereditary Voluntaryism in Church matters, and indeed came to him ready-made in that form. What is surprising, and what corroborates our view of the essentially non-theoretical character of his intellect, is the unsystematic manner in which he was content to hold his principle, his failure to carry it out consistently, his apparent inability to perceive the full sweep of its logical consequences. Thus, to the words just quoted he appends these,—"Lawyers, of course, are different, "as they have to do with the state, with the law of the "land." Was there ever a more innocent *non sequitur*? If any one may set up as a curer of diseases and make a living in that craft by charging fees from those who choose to employ him, why may not any one set up as a lawyer, and why may not I select and employ any one I please to plead my cause in court, instead of being bound to employ one of a limited number of wigged and gowned gentlemen?

If, then, it was not in theory or speculation that Dr. John Brown excelled,—and that there was no deficiency of hereditary speculative faculty in his family, but much the reverse, is proved not only by the theological distinction of his predecessors in the family, and by the brilliant career of his cousin, Dr. Samuel Brown, but also by the reputation among us at this moment of his still nearer relative, the eminent Philosophical Chemist of Edinburgh University,—in what was it that he did excel? It was in what I may call an unusual *appreciativeness* of all that did recommend itself to him as good and admirable. In few men has there been such a fulfilment of the memorable apostolic injunction: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report,—if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise,—think on these things." The context of that passage shows that what was enjoined on the Philippians was a habit of meditative and ruminative appreciation of all that was noteworthy, of every variety, within accredited and prescribed limits. Dr. John Brown was a model in this respect. Within the limits of his preference for the concrete and practical over the abstract and theoretical, he was a man of peculiarly keen relish for anything excellent, and of peculiar assiduity in imparting his likings to others.

His habit of appreciativeness is seen, on the small scale, even in such a matter as his appropriation and use of pithy phrases and anecdotes picked up miscellaneously. "'Pray, Mr. Opie, may I ask what you "mix your colours with?' said a brisk dilettante "student to the great painter. 'With brains, sir,' was

"the gruff reply." Having met this story in some Life of the painter Opie, Dr. John Brown had fastened on it, or it had adhered to him; and not only did he hang one whole paper on it, entitled *With Brains, Sir*, but he made it do duty again and again in other papers. At times when Dr. Chalmers happened to be talked to about some person not already known to him, and was told that the person was a man of ability, "Yes, but has he *wecht*, Sir, has he *wecht*?" was his common question in reply; and, as Dr. John Brown had also perceived that it is not mere cleverness that is effective in the world, and that *weight* is the main thing, he was never tired of bringing in Dr. Chalmers's phrase to enforce that meaning. When Dr. John wanted to praise anything of the literary kind as being of the most robust intellectual quality, not food for babes but very "strong meat" indeed, he would say "This is lions' marrow." As he was not a man to conceal his obligations, even for a phrase, we learn from him incidentally that he had taken the metaphor originally from this passage in one of the pieces of the English poet Prior:—

> "That great Achilles might employ
> The strength designed to ruin Troy,
> He dined on lions' marrow, spread
> On toasts of ammunition bread."

Dr. John had a repertory of such individual phrases and aphorisms, picked up from books or conversation, which he liked to use as flavouring particles for his own text. He dealt largely also in extracts and quotations of greater length. Any bit that struck him as fine in a new book of verses, any scrap of old Scottish ballad not generally known, any interesting little poem by a friend of his own that he had

seen in manuscript, or any similar thing communicated to him as not having seen the light before, was apt to be pounced upon, stamped with his *imprimatur*, and turned into service in his own papers, as motto, relevant illustration, or pleasant addition. His fondness for quotation from his favourite prose authors has already been mentioned. In fact, some of his papers are little more than patches of quotations connected by admiring comments. In such cases it is as if he said to his readers, "How nice this is, how capital! don't you agree with me?" Sometimes you may not quite agree with him, or you may wish that he had thrown fewer quotations at you, and had said more on the subject out of his own head; but you always recognise his appreciativeness.

On the larger scale of the papers themselves the same appreciativeness is discernible. Take first the papers which are most in the nature of criticisms. Such are those entitled *Henry Vaughan*, *Arthur H. Hallam*, *Thackeray's Death*, *Notes on Art*, *John Leech*, *Hallé's Recital*, and *Sir Henry Raeburn*. Whether in the literary papers of this group, or in the art papers, you can see how readily and strongly Dr. John Brown could admire, and what a propagandist he was of his admirations. If Henry Vaughan the Silurist, the quaint and thoughtful English poet of the seventeenth century, is now a better known figure in English literary history than he was a generation ago, it is owing, I believe, in some measure, to Dr. John Brown's resuscitation of him. So, when Tennyson's *In Memoriam* appeared in 1850, and all the world was moved by that extraordinary poem, who but Dr. John Brown could not rest till he had ascertained all that was possible about young Arthur

Hallam, by obtaining a copy of his "Remains in Verse and Prose," privately printed in 1834, with a memoir by the author's father, Hallam the historian, and till he had been permitted to give to the public, in liberal extracts from the memoir, and by quotation from the pieces themselves, such an authentic account of Tennyson's dead friend as all were desiring? The paper called *Thackeray's Death*, though the only paper on Thackeray now to be found among Dr. John Brown's collected writings, is by no means, I believe, the only paper he wrote on Thackeray. If there was a Thackeray-worshipper within the British Islands, it was Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh. Thackeray was his greatest man by far, after Scott, or hardly after Scott, among our British novelists,—his idol, almost his demigod; he had signified this, if I mistake not, in an article on Thackeray while Thackeray's fame was still only in the making; and the particular paper now left us is but a re-expression of this high regard for Thackeray as an author, blended with reminiscences of his own meetings with Thackeray in Edinburgh, and testimonies of his warm affection for the man. Another of his chief admirations was Ruskin. I can remember how, when the first volume of the *Modern Painters* appeared, the rumour of it ran at once through Edinburgh, causing a most unusual stir of interest in the new book, and in the extraordinary "Oxford Graduate" who was its author; and I am pretty sure now that it was Dr. John Brown that had first imported the book among us, and had enlightened Dr. Chalmers and others as to its merits. There is no article on Ruskin among the collected papers; but there are frequent references to him, and his influence can be discerned in all the Art-criticisms.

These Art-criticisms of Dr. John Brown, however, are hardly criticisms in the ordinary sense. No canons of Art are expounded or applied in them. All that the critic does is to stand, as it were, before the particular picture he is criticising,—a Wilkie, a Raeburn, a Turner, a Landseer, a Delaroche, a Holman Hunt, or, as it might happen, some new performance by one of his Edinburgh artist-friends, Duncan, Sir George Harvey, or Sir Noel Paton,—exclaiming "How good this is, how true, how powerful, how pathetic!" while he attends to the direct human interest of the subject, interprets the story of the picture in his own way, and throws in kindly anecdotes about the painter. It is the same, *mutatis mutandis*, for music, in his notices of pieces by Beethoven and others, as heard at Halle's concerts. His most elaborate paper of Art-criticism is that entitled *John Leech*. It is throughout a glowing eulogium on the celebrated caricaturist, with notices of some of his best cartoons, but passing into an affectionate memoir of the man, on his own account and as the friend of Thackeray, and indeed incorporating reminiscences of Leech and Thackeray that had been supplied him by a friend of both as material for a projected Memoir of Leech on a larger scale. If not in this particular paper, at least here and there in some of the others, the query may suggest itself whether the laudation is not excessive. One asks sometimes whether the good Dr. John was not carried away by the amiable fault of supposing that what happens to be present before one of a decidedly likeable kind at any moment, especially if it be recommended by private friendship, must be the very nonsuch of its kind in the whole world. Another query forced on one is whether there did

not sometimes lurk under Dr. John's superlative admiration of a chief favourite in any walk an antipathy to some other in the same walk. It is told of Sir Philip Francis, the reputed author of *Junius*, that, when he was an old man, he gave this counsel to a promising young member of the House of Commons whom he had heard deliver a speech distinguished by the generosity of its praises of some of his fellow-members,—"Young man, take my advice; never praise anybody unless it be *in odium tertii*," *i.e.* "unless it be to the discredit of some third party." No man ever acted less in the spirit of this detestable, this truly diabolic, advice than Dr. John Brown; and one's question rather is whether he did not actually reverse it by never attacking or finding fault with any one unless it were *in laudem tertii*, to the increased credit of some third party. Whether he was so actuated, consciously or unconsciously, in his declaration of irreconcilable dislike to Maclise, and his exceptionally severe treatment of that artist, I will not venture to say; but I can find no other sufficient explanation of his habitual depreciation of Dickens. His antipathy to Dickens, his resentment of any attempted comparison between Dickens and Thackeray, was proverbial among his friends, and amounted almost to a monomania.

While, as will have been seen, Dr. John was by no means insensible to impressions from anything excellent coming from besouth the Tweed, it was naturally in his own Scotland, and among the things and persons immediately round about him there, that his faculty of appreciation revelled most constantly. With the majority of his literary fellow-countrymen that have attained popularity in Scotland during the last fifty years, he derived many of his literary instincts from

the immense influence of "Scotticism" which had been infused into the preceding generation, and is seen, in his choice of themes, following reverently in the wake of the great Sir Walter. He reminds one somewhat of Aytoun in this respect, though with a marked Presbyterian difference. Most of his papers are on Scottish subjects; and in some of them, such as his *Queen Mary's Child-Garden*, his *Minchmoor*, the paper called *The Enterkin*, that entitled *A Jacobite Family*, and that entitled *Biggar and the House of Fleming*, we have descriptions of Scottish scenes and places very much in the spirit of Sir Walter, though by no means slavishly so, with notes of their historical associations, and recovery of local legends, romances, and humours. In a more original vein, though also principally Scottish, are those papers which may be described as memoirs and character-sketches in a more express sense than the three or four already referred to as combining memoir with criticism. By far the most important of these is his Memoir of his own Father, in supplement to the Life of his Father by the Rev. Dr. John Cairns, and published under the too vague title of *Letter to John Cairns, D.D.* It is a really beautiful piece of writing, not only full of filial affection, and painting for us his father's life and character with vivid fidelity, but also interesting for its reminiscences of the author's own early years, and its sketches of several eminent ministers of the Scottish Secession communion whom he had known as friends of his father. The paper entitled *Dr. Chalmers*, though not particularly good, attests the strength of the impression made by that great man on Dr. John Brown, as on every one else that knew Dr. Chalmers. Better, and indeed fine, though slight,

are *Edward Forbes, Dr. George Wilson, The Duke of Athole, Struan*, and *Miss Stirling Graham of Duntrune*. On the whole, however, the most characteristic papers of the Memoir class are those of Medical Biography, including *Locke and Sydenham, Dr. Andrew Combe, Dr. Henry Marshall and Military Hygiène, Our Gideon Grays, Dr. Andrew Brown and Sydenham, Dr. Adams of Banchory, Dr. John Scott and His Son, Mr. Syme, and Sir Robert Christison.* Sydenham was Dr. John Brown's ideal of a physician, and his account of that English physician and of his place in the history of medicine is of much value. The medical profession is indebted to him also for his warm-hearted vindication of those whom he calls, after Scott, "Our Gideon Grays,"—the hard-working and often poorly paid medical practitioners of our Scottish country villages and parishes,—and for the justice he has done to such a scholarly representative of that class as the late Dr. Adams of Banchory, and to such recent medical reformers as Dr. Andrew Combe and Dr. Henry Marshall. Especially interesting to us here ought to be the obituary sketches of Syme and Christison, so recently the ornaments of the Medical School of Edinburgh University. He threw his whole heart into his sketch of Syme, his admiration of whom, dating from the days when he had been Syme's pupil and apprentice in surgery, had been increased by life-long intimacy. I may therefore dwell a little on this sketch, the rather because it reminds me of perhaps the only occasion on which I was for some hours in the society of Syme and Dr. John Brown together.

In the autumn of 1868, Carlyle, then Lord Rector of our University, and in the seventy-third year of

his age, was persuaded, on account of some little ailment of his, to come to Edinburgh and put himself under the care of Professor Syme for surgical treatment. Syme, proud of such a patient, and resolved that he should have his best skill, would hear of no other arrangement than that Carlyle should be his guest for the necessary time. For a fortnight or more, accordingly, Carlyle resided with Syme in his beautiful house of Millbank in the southern suburb of our city. Pains were taken to prevent the fact from becoming known, that Carlyle might not be troubled by visitors. But one day, when Carlyle was convalescent, there was a quiet little dinner party at Millbank to meet him. Besides Syme and Carlyle, and one or two of the members of Syme's family, there were present only Dr. John Carlyle, Dr. John Brown, and myself. It was very pleasant, at the dinner table, to observe the attention paid by the manly, energetic, and generally peremptory and pugnacious, little surgeon to his important guest, his satisfaction in having him there, and his half-amused, half-wondering glances at him as a being of another *genus* than his own, but whom he had found as lovable in private as he was publicly tremendous. There was no "tossing and goring of several persons" by Carlyle, in that dining-room at all events, but only genial and cheerful talk about this and that. After dinner, we five went upstairs to a smaller room, where the talk was continued, still more miscellaneously, Syme and Carlyle having most of it. That very day there had been sent to Carlyle, by his old friend David Laing, a copy of the new edition which Laing had just privately printed of the rare *Gude and Godly Ballates* by the

brothers Wedderburn, originally published in 1578; and Carlyle, taking up the volume from the table, would dip into it here and there, and read some passages aloud for his own amusement and ours. One piece of fourteen stanzas he read entire, with much gusto, and with excellent chaunt and pronunciation of the old Scotch. Here are three of the stanzas :—

"Thocht thow be Paip or Cardinall,
Sa heich in thy Pontificall,
Resist thow God that creat all,
Than downe thou sall cum, downe.

"Thocht thow be Archebischop or Deane,
Chantour, Chanslar, or Chaplane,
Resist thow God, thy gloir is gane,
And downe thow sall cum, downe.

"Thocht thow flow in Philosophie,
Or graduate in Theologie,
Yit, and thow fyle the veritie,
Than downe thow sall cum, downe."

Most pleasant of all it was when, later in the evening, we moved to the low trellised verandah on the south side of the house, opening on the beautiful garden of flowers and evergreens in which Syme took such delight. It was a fine, still evening; and, as the talk went on in the open air, with the garden stretching in front of us and the views of the hills beyond, only with the accompaniment now of wreaths of tobacco-smoke, Syme, who disliked tobacco, was smilingly tolerant even of that accompaniment, in honour of the chief smoker.

For more than twelve years after that evening, which I remember now like a dream, Carlyle was still in the land of the living, advancing from his seventy-third year to his eighty-sixth; but hardly a year of the twelve had elapsed when the great surgeon who had

entertained him, and who was so much his junior, was struck by the paralysis which carried him off. It is from Dr. John Brown that we have this touching record of Syme's last days :—

"I was the first to see him when struck down by *hemiplegia*. It was in Shandwick Place, where he had his chambers,—sleeping and enjoying his evenings in his beautiful Millbank, with its flowers, its matchless orchids and heaths and azaleas, its bananas and grapes and peaches : with Blackford Hill,—where Marmion saw the Scottish host mustering for Flodden,—in front, and the Pentlands, with Cairketton Hill, their advanced guard, cutting the sky, its ruddy porphyry *scaur* holding the slanting shadows in its bosom. He was, as before said, in his room in Shandwick Place, sitting in his chair, having been set up by his faithful Blackbell. His face was distorted. He said—'John, this is the conclusion'; and so it was, to his, and our, and the world's sad cost. He submitted to his fate with manly fortitude, but he felt it to the uttermost,—struck down in his prime, full of rich power, abler than ever to do good to men, his soul surviving his brain, and looking on at its steady ruin during many sad months. He became softer, gentler,—more easily moved, even to tears; but the judging power, the perspicacity, the piercing to the core, remained untouched. Henceforward, of course, life was maimed. How he bore up against this, resigning his delights of teaching, of doing good to men, of seeing and cherishing his students, of living in the front of the world,—how he accepted all this only those nearest him can know. I have never seen anything more pathetic than when, near his death, he lay speechless, but full of feeling and mind, and made known in some inscrutable way to his old gardener and friend that he wished to see a certain orchid which he knew should be then in bloom. The big, clumsy, knowing Paterson, glum and victorious (he was for ever getting prizes at the Horticultural), brought it,—the *Stanhopea Tigrina*,—in without a word. It was the very one,—radiant in beauty, white, with a brown freckle, like Imogen's mole, and, like it, 'right proud of that most delicate lodging.' He gazed at it, and, bursting into a passion of tears, motioned it away as insufferable."

To have been such a chronicler of the excellent as Dr. John Brown was required more than endowment, however extraordinary, in any mere passive quality of appreciativeness. It required the poetic eye, the imaginative faculty in its active form, the power of infusing himself into his subject, the discern-

ment and subtlety of a real artist. Visible to some extent in his criticisms of books and pictures, and also in his memoirs and character-sketches, and in a still higher degree in those papers of local Scottish description, legend, and reminiscence to which I have already referred,—*Queen Mary's Child Garden*, *Minchmoor*, *The Enterkin*, *A Jacobite Family*, and *Biggar and the House of Fleming*,—this rising of sympathetic appreciation into poetic art and phantasy appears most conspicuously of all in those papers or parts of papers in which the matter is whimsical or out of the common track. Perhaps it is his affection for out-of-the-way subjects, evident even in the titles of some of his papers, that has led to the comparison of Dr. John Brown with Charles Lamb. Like that English humourist, he did go into odd corners for his themes, — still, however, keeping within Scottish ground, and finding his oddities, whether of humour or of pathos, in native Scottish life and tradition. Or rather, by his very appreciativeness, he was a kind of magnet to which stray and hitherto unpublished curiosities, whether humorous or pathetic, floating in Scottish society, attached themselves naturally, as if seeking an editor. In addition to the illustrations of this furnished by the already-mentioned papers of Scottish legend, or by parts of them, one may mention now his paper entitled *The Black Dwarf's Bones*, that entitled *Mystifications*, his *Marjorie Fleming* or *Pet Marjorie*, his *Jeems the Doorkeeper*, and the quaint little trifle entitled *Oh! I'm wat, wat.* In the first three of these Dr. John Brown is seen distinctly as the editor of previously unpublished curiosities. There were relics of information respecting that strange being, David

Ritchie, the deformed misanthropist of Peeblesshire, who had been the original of one of Scott's shorter novels. These came to Dr. John Brown, and he strung them together, extracts and quotations, on a thread of connecting narrative. Again, having had the privilege of knowing intimately that venerable Miss Stirling Graham of Duntrune who is the subject of one of his memorial sketches, and who used to reside in Edinburgh every winter till within a few years of her death in 1877 at the age of ninety-five, who but Dr. John Brown first persuaded the venerable lady to give to the world her recollections of her marvellous dramatic feats in her earlier days, when she used to mystify Scott, and Jeffrey, and Lord Gillies, and John Clerk of Eldin, and Count Flahault, and whole companies of their contemporaries in Edinburgh drawing-rooms, by her disguised appearances in the dress and character of an eccentric old Scottish gentlewoman; and who but Dr. John immortalised the tradition by telling her story over again, and re-imagining for us the whole of that Edinburgh society of 1820-21 in which Miss Stirling Graham had moved so bewitchingly? Ten years before that, or in December 1811, there had died in Edinburgh a little girl of a family with whom Scott was particularly intimate, and who lived near him. She was but in her ninth year; but for several years she had been the pet and wonder of her friends, for her childish humours and abilities, her knowledge of books and poetry, the signs of a quaint genius in her behaviour, and in her own little exercises in prose and in verse. Many a heart was sore, Scott's for one, we are told, when poor little "Pet Marjorie" died; and no one that knew her ever

forgot her. One sister of hers, who survived her for seventy years, cherished her memory to the last like a religion, and had preserved all her childish and queerly spelt letters and journals, with other scraps of writing, tied up with a lock of her light-brown hair. To these faded letters and papers Dr. John Brown had access; and the result was his exquisitely tender *Pet Marjorie* or *Marjorie Fleming*,—the gem in its kind among all his papers, and perhaps the most touching illustration in our language of Shakespeare's text, "How quick bright things come to confusion!" Here, as in some other cases, it may be said that Dr. John Brown only edited material that came ready to his hand. Even in that view of the matter, one could at least wish that there were more such editing; but it is an insufficient view. He had recovered the long-dead little Marjorie Fleming for himself; and the paper, though consisting largely of quotations and extracts, is as properly his own as any of the rest. But, should there be a disposition still with some to distinguish between editing and invention, and to regard *Mystifications* and *Marjorie Fleming* as merely well-edited curiosities of a fascinating kind, no such distinction will trouble one who passes to *Jeems the Doorkeeper*. A real person, as the writer tells us, sat for that sketch too, and we have a portrait of the actual Jeems who officiated as his father's beadle in Broughton Place Church; but with what originality and friskiness of humour is the portrait drawn, and how fantastically the paper breaks in the end into streaks of a skyward sermon! There is the same quaint originality, or Lamb-like oddity of conglomerate, in the little fragment called "*Oh, I'm wat, wat,*" and in one or two

other trifles, with similarly fantastic titles, which I have not named.

There is no better test of imaginative or poetic faculty in a man than susceptibility to anything verging on the preternaturally solemn or ghastly. Of the strength of this susceptibility in Dr. John Brown's nature there are evidences, here and there, in not a few of his writings. Take for example the following reminiscence, in his paper entitled *Thackeray's Death*, of a walk with Thackeray in one of the suburbs of Edinburgh :—

"We cannot resist here recalling one Sunday evening in December when he was walking with two friends along the Dean Road, to the west of Edinburgh,—one of the noblest outlets to any city. It was a lovely evening,—such a sunset as one never forgets : a rich dark bar of cloud hovered over the sun, going down behind the Highland hills, lying bathed in amethystine bloom ; between this cloud and the hills there was a narrow slip of the pure ether, of a tender cowslip colour, lucid, and as it were the very body of heaven in its clearness ; every object standing out as if etched upon the sky. The north-west end of Corstorphine Hill, with its trees and rocks, lay in the heart of this pure radiance ; and there a wooden crane, used in the quarry below, was so placed as to assume the figure of a cross : there it was, unmistakable, lifted up against the crystalline sky. All three gazed at it silently. As they gazed, he gave utterance, in a tremulous, gentle, and rapid voice, to what we all were feeling, in the word 'CALVARY!' The friends walked on in silence, and then turned to other things."

Even a more remarkable example is that furnished by the paper entitled "*In Clear Dream and Solemn Vision.*" The paper purports to be the record of a singular dream, dreamt by a man whom Dr. John Brown counted among his friends, and of whose great abilities, powers of jest and whimsical humour, and powers of a still higher kind, there are yet recollections in the lawyer-world of Edinburgh,—the late A. S. Logan, Sheriff of Forfarshire. I prefer here to tell the dream in my own words, as it has remained

in my memory since I first heard it described many years ago. This I do because, while the version of it I have so retained came to me originally from Dr. John Brown himself, it seems to me better than the version subsequently given by him in his own paper, attenuated as it is there by explanations and comments, and by the insertion of a weak metrical expansion of it by Logan himself.

The Dream may be entitled *The Death of Judas*, and was as follows:—The dreamer seemed to be in a lonely, dreary landscape somewhere, the nearer vicinity of which consisted of a low piece of marshy ground, with dull, stagnant pools, overgrown with reeds. The air was heavy and thick: not a sound of life, or sight of anything indicating human presence or habitation, save that on the other side of the marshy ground from the dreamer, and near the margin of the pools and reeds, was what seemed to be a deserted wooden hut, the door half-broken, and the side-timbers and rafters also ragged, so that through the rifts there was a dim perception of the dark interior. But lo! as the dreamer gazed, it appeared as if there were a motion of something or other within the hut, signs of some living thing in it moving uneasily and haggardly to and fro. Hardly has one taken notice of this when one is aware of a new sight outside the hut,—a beautiful dove, or dove-like bird, of spotless white, that has somehow stationed itself close to the door, and is brooding there, intent and motionless, in a guardian-like attitude. For a while the ugly, ragged hut, with the mysterious signs of motion inside of it, and this white dove-like creature outside at its door, are the only things in the marshy tract of ground that hold the eye. But, suddenly, what is this third thing? Round from the

gable of the hut it emerges slowly towards the marshy front, another bird-like figure, but dark and horrible-looking, with long and lean legs and neck, like a crane. Past the hut it stalks and still forward, slowly and with loathsome gait, its long neck undulating as it moves, till it has reached the pools and their beds of reeds. There, standing for a moment, it dips down its head among the reeds into the ooze of one of the pools; and, when it raises its head again, there is seen wriggling in its mouth something like a small, black, slimy snake, or worm. With this in its mouth, it stalks slowly back, making straight for the white dove that is still brooding at the door of the hut. When it has reached the door, there seems to be a struggle of life and death between the two creatures,—the obscene, hideous, crane-like bird, and the pure, white innocent, —till, at last, by force, the dove is compelled to open its throat, into which its enemy drops the worm or snake. Immediately the dove drops dead; and at that same instant the mysterious motion within the hut increases and becomes more violent,—no mere motion now, but a fierce strife and commotion, with nothing distinctly visible or decipherable even yet, but a vague sense of some agony transacting itself in the dark interior within the loop-holed timbers and rafters, and of two human arms swung round and round like flails. Then, all at once, it flashed upon the dreamer what he had been beholding. It was Judas that was within the hut, and that was the suicide of the Betrayer.

Every author is to be estimated by specimens of him at his very best. Dr. John Brown had a favourite phrase for such specimens of what he thought the very best in the authors he liked. Of a passage, or of a whole paper, that seemed to him perfect in its kind,

perfect in workmanship as well as in conception, he would say that it was "done to the quick." The phrase indicates, in the first place, Dr. John Brown's notions of what constitutes true literature of any kind, or at least true literature of a popular kind, as distinct from miscellaneous printed matter. It must be something that will reach the feelings. This being presupposed, then that is best in any author which reaches the feelings most swiftly and directly,—cuts at once, as it were, with knife-like acuteness, to the most sensitive depths. That there are not a few individual passages scattered through Dr. John's own writings, and also some entire papers of his, that answer this description, will have appeared by our review of his writings so far as they have been yet enumerated. In such papers and passages, as every reader will observe, even the workmanship is at its best. The author gathers himself up, as it were; his artistic craft becomes more decisive and subtle with the heightened glow of his feelings; and his style, apt to be a little diffuse and slipshod at other times, becomes nervous and firm.

Of whatever other productions of Dr. John Brown's pen this may be asserted, of whatever other things of his it may be said that they are thus masterly at all points and "done to the quick," that supreme praise must be accorded, at all events, to the two papers I have reserved to the last,—*Rab and his Friends* and *Our Dogs*. Among the many fine and humane qualities of our late fellow-citizen it so happened that love of the lower animals, and especially of the most faithful and most companionable of them, was one of the chief. Since Sir Walter Scott limped along Princes Street, and the passing dogs

used to fawn upon him, recognising him as the friend of their kind, there has been no such lover of dogs, no such expert in dog-nature, in this city at least, as was Dr. John Brown. It was impossible that he should leave this part of himself, one of the ruling affections of his life, unrepresented in his literary effusions. Hence, while there are dogs incidentally elsewhere in his writings, these two papers are all but dedicated to dogs. What need to quote from them? What need to describe them? They have been read, one of them at least, by perhaps two millions of the English-reading population of the earth: the very children of our Board Schools know the story of *Rab and his Friends*. How laughingly it opens; with what fun and rollick we follow the two boys in their scamper through the Edinburgh streets sixty years ago after the hullabaloo of the dog-fight near the Tron Kirk! What a sensation on our first introduction, in the Cowgate, under the South Bridge, to the great Rab, the carrier's dog, rambling about idly "as if with his hands in his pockets," till the little bull-terrier that has been baulked of his victory in the former fight insanely attacks him and finds the consequence! And then what a mournful sequel, as we come, six years afterwards, to know the Howgate carrier himself and his wife, and the wife is brought to the hospital at Minto House, and the carrier and Rab remain there till the operation is over, and the dead body of poor Ailie is carried home by her husband in his cart over the miles of snowy country road, and the curtain falls black at last over the death of the carrier too and the end of poor Rab himself! Though the story, as the author vouches, "is in all essentials strictly matter of fact," who could have told it as Dr. John Brown did? Little wonder that it has

taken rank as his masterpiece, and that he was so commonly spoken of while he was alive as "The author of *Rab and His Friends.*" It is by that story, and by those other papers that may be associated with it as also masterly in their different varieties, as all equally "done to the quick," that his name will live. Yes, many long years hence, when all of us are gone, I can imagine that a little volume will be in circulation, containing *Rab and his Friends* and *Our Dogs*, and also let us say the *Letter to Dr. Cairns*, and *Queen Mary's Child-Garden*, and *Jeems the Doorkeeper*, and the paper called *Mystifications*, and that called *Pet Marjorie* or *Marjorie Fleming*, and that then readers now unborn, thrilled by that peculiar touch which only things of heart and genius can give, will confess to the charm that now fascinates us, and will think with interest of Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh.

LITERARY HISTORY OF EDINBURGH:

A GENERAL REVIEW[1]

I

The Literary History of Edinburgh, in any special sense, may be said to have begun in the reigns of the Scottish Kings James IV. (1488-1513) and James V. (1513-1542.) There had been a good deal of scattered literary activity in Scotland before,—all, of course, in manuscript only,—in which Edinburgh had shared; but it was not till those two reigns,—when Edinburgh had become distinctly the capital of the Scottish Kingdom, and was in possession of a printing-press or two,—it was not till then that Edinburgh could claim to be the central seat of the Scottish Muses. What was there anywhere over the rest of Scotland in the shape of new literary product that could then compete with the novelties that came from that cluster of "makars" and men of genius,—Dunbar, Gavin Douglas, and Sir David Lindsay the three best remembered of them,—whose habitual residence was in Edinburgh, and whose figures were to be seen daily in the picturesque long slope of the High Street and the Canongate which connects the ancient Castle with the venerable Holyrood?

[1] From *The Scotsman* of 8th and 9th November 1889. This paper is purposely placed last in the volume, as containing necessarily a recapitulation of portions of the matter of some of the preceding.

From the Edinburgh of the two reigns mentioned we pass to the Edinburgh of the Regencies for the infant and absent Queen Mary, of Queen Mary's own short resident reign, and of the beginnings of the reign of James VI. Through this period, carrying us from 1542 to about 1580, Edinburgh still maintained her metropolitan distinction in literature, as in other things; though with the enormous difference imported into literature, as into other things, by the Reformation struggle and its consequences. Lindsay, the last of the bright poetic triad of the two bygone reigns, survived far into the Reformation struggle,—in which indeed he was a champion of the first mark and importance on the Protestant side; and, though he died before the conclusive Reformation enactment of the Scottish Estates in 1560, he had lived long enough to know personally, and as it were to put his hands on, those who were to be the foremost intellects of Scotland in her new and Protestantised condition. When John Knox and George Buchanan returned from their Continental exile and wanderings to spend their veteran days in their native land,—Knox with his already acquired reputation by English theological writings and pamphlets, and Buchanan with the rarer European fame of superb Latinist and scholar, *poetarum sui sæculi facile princeps*, as his foreign admirers already universally applauded him,—where could they settle but in Edinburgh? For thirteen years, accordingly, Knox was minister of Edinburgh and her most powerful citizen, writing industriously still, while he preached and directed Scottish politics; and it was in Edinburgh, in 1572, that he died and was buried. Of Buchanan's life after his return to Scotland, portions were spent at

St. Andrews or in Stirling; but Edinburgh had most of *him* too. It was in Edinburgh that he published his *Baptistes*, his *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*, and others of his writings in verse or in prose; and it was in an Edinburgh lodging that he died in 1582, after having sent to the press the last proof-sheets of his *Rerum Scoticarum Historia*, or Latin History of Scotland. Recollect such minor Edinburgh contemporaries of those two, of literary repute of one kind or another, as Sir Richard Maitland, Robert Pont, Thomas Craig, and the collector George Bannatyne,—not forgetting that before 1580 Edinburgh had glimpses of the new force that was at hand for all Scotland, literary as well as ecclesiastical, in Andrew Melville,—and it will be seen that, though the Reformation had changed notably the character of the intellectual pursuits and interests of the Scottish capital, as of Scotland generally, yet there had been no real interruption so far of that literary lustre of the town which had begun with Dunbar at the Court of James IV. In fact, the first eighty years of the sixteenth century may be regarded (the pre-Reformation authorship and the post-Reformation authorship taken together) as one definitely marked age, and the earliest, in the literary history of Edinburgh. It was an age of high credit in Scottish literary history all in all. Scotland was then no whit inferior to contemporary England in literary power and productiveness. On the contrary, as it is admitted now by the historians of English Literature that in the long tract of time between the death of Chaucer and the appearance of Spenser it was in Scotland rather than in England that the real succession to Chaucer was kept up in the British Islands, so it must be admitted that

it was in the last eighty years of that long period of comparative gloom in England that the torch that had been kindled in Scotland was passed there most nimbly and brilliantly from hand to hand.

From 1580 onwards there was a woeful change. "Let not your Majesty doubt," Napier of Merchiston ventured to say to James VI., while that King was still Sovereign of Scotland only, but after he had shown his own literary ambition in his *Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Art of Poesie* and other Edinburgh publications, "let not your Majesty doubt "that there are within your realm, as well as in other "countries, godly and good ingines, versed and "exercised in all manner of honest science and "godly discipline, who by your Majesty's instigation "might yield forth works and fruits worthy of "memory, which otherwise, lacking some mighty "Mæcenas to encourage them, may perchance be "buried with eternal silence." The augury, so far as it was one of hope, was not fulfilled. Through the last forty-five years of the reign of James, and then through all the rest of the seventeenth century, including the reign of Charles I., the interregnum of the English Commonwealth and the Oliverian Protectorate, the Restoration reigns of Charles II. and James II., and the reign of William and Mary,—through all that long period, the greatest and richest in the literary annals of England, the time when she made herself the astonishment of the nations by her Elizabethan splendour in Spenser, Bacon, Shakespeare, and their many contemporaries, and then by the succession to these in the great series of which Hobbes, Milton, Jeremy Taylor, Bunyan, Dryden, and Locke were the chiefs,—what had Scotland to show in com-

parison? In the first section of the period Napier of Merchiston himself and Drummond of Hawthornden,—a pair well worthy of attention, and both of them specially Edinburgh men; but after these only or mainly a straggle of mediocrities, or of lower than mediocrities. A tradition, it is true, in Arthur Johnston and others, of an excellent Scottish Latinity in discipleship to Buchanan,—the more the pity in so far as this prevented a free and brave exercise of the vernacular; the apparition here and there, too, of a spirit of finer quality among the ecclesiastics, such as Rutherford and Leighton, or of an individual book of mark, such as Baillie's *Letters* or Stair's *Institutes*; but, for the rest, within Scotland, and without tracking any continuation of the old race of the *Scoti extra Scotiam agentes*, only such small mercies as a Mure of Rowallan, a Semple of Beltrees, or a Cleland, among the versifiers, or, in prose, a Hume of Godscroft, a Spotswood, a Sir Thomas Urquhart, or a Sir George Mackenzie!

What was the cause of this poverty? The loss of the benefits of a resident Scottish kingship, consequent on the removal of the Court to England in 1603, may have had some effect. No chance after that of Napier's desired agency of a mighty royal Mæcenas in Holyrood for stirring the Scottish "ingines." A more certain cause, however, is to be found in the agonising intensity with which, through the whole of the century and a quarter from 1580 onwards, the soul and heart of Scotland, in all classes of the community alike, were occupied with the successive phases of the one vexed question of Presbytery-versus-Episcopacy in Church government, and its theological and political

concomitants. It was in the nature of this controversy, agitated as it was with such persevering, such life-or-death vehemence, in Scotland, to strangle all the ordinary muses. Here, however, lies the historical compensation. There are other interests in a nation, other duties, than those of art and literature; and he would be but a wretched Scotsman who, while hovering over the history of his country in the seventeenth century and noting her deficiencies then in literary respects in comparison with England, should forget that this very century was the time of the most powerful action ever exerted by Scotland in the general history of the British Islands, and that, when the great British Revolution of that century was over, its accounts balanced, and the residuum of indubitably successful and useful result summed up, no little of that residuum was traceable to Scotland's obstinate perseverance so long in her own peculiar politico-ecclesiastical controversy, and to what had been argued or done in the course of it, on one side or the other, by such men as Andrew Melville, Alexander Henderson, Argyle, Montrose, Claverhouse, and Carstares. But it is on Scottish Literature that we are now reporting, and for that the report must remain as has been stated. From Dan to Beersheba, from Hawick to Thurso, all through the Scottish century and a quarter under view, very few roses or other flowers, and not much even of happy thistle-bloom!

A revival came at last. It came in the beginning of the eighteenth century, just after the union of Scotland with England in the reign of Queen Anne, when the literary succession to Dryden in England was represented by such of the Queen Anne wits and their

Georgian recruits as Defoe, Matthew Prior, Swift, Congreve, Steele, Addison, Gay, and Pope. It was then that, from a group of lingering Scottish literary stagers of the antique type, such as Bishop Sage, Dr. Pitcairn, Pennicuik, Fletcher of Saltoun, Wodrow, and Ruddiman, there stepped forth the shrewd Edinburgh periwig-maker who was to be for so many years the popular little Horace of Auld Reekie, not only supplying the lieges with such songs and poems as they had not had the like of for many a day, but actually shaking them again into some sense of the importance of popular books and of a taste for lightsome reading. Yes, it was Allan Ramsay,—the placid little man of the night-cap that one sees in the white statue of him in Princes Street,—it was he that was the real reviver of literature and of literary enthusiasm in Scotland after their long abeyance. He was conscious of his mission :—

> "The chiels of London, Cam., and Ox.
> Hae reared up great poetic stocks
> Of *Rapes*, of *Buckets*, *Sarks*, and *Locks*,
> While we neglect
> To shaw their betters. This provokes
> Me to reflect
>
> On the learn'd days of Gawn Dunkell :
> Our country then a tale could tell :
> Europe had nane mair snack and snell
> In verse or prose :
> Our kings were poets too themsell,
> Bauld and jocose."

He combined, as we see here, the two passions of a patriotic and antiquarian fondness for the native old literature of Scotland, the all but forgotten old Scottish poetry of the sixteenth century, and an eager interest in what his English contemporaries in the south, the "chiels of London,"—to wit, Prior, Addison,

Pope, Gay, and the rest,—had recently done, or were still doing, for the maintenance of the great literary traditions of England. How strong was his interest in those "chiels of London," how much he admired them, appears not only from their influence upon him in his own special art of a resuscitated Scottish poetry in an eclectic modification of the old vernacular, but also in the dedication of so much of his later life to the commercial enterprise of an Edinburgh circulating library for the supply of his fellow-citizens with all recent or current English books, and in his less successful enterprise for the introduction of the English drama by the establishment of a regular Edinburgh theatre. In short, before Allan Ramsay's death in 1758, what with his own example and exertions, what from the stimulus upon his countrymen independently of the new sense, more and more consciously felt since the Union, of an acquired partnership with England in all that great inheritance in the English speech which had till then belonged especially to England, and in the common responsibilities of such partnership thenceforward, Scotland was visibly holding up her head again. Before that date there had appeared, in Ramsay's wake, some of the other forerunners of that famous race of eighteenth-century Scottish writers who, so far from giving cause for any continuance of the imputation of the literary inferiority of Scotland to England, were to command the respect of Europe by the vigour of their co-operation and rivalry with their English coevals.

Without taking into account Lady Elizabeth Wardlaw, whose noble poetic fragment of *Hardyknute* was made public by Ramsay, and whose influence on the subsequent course of specially Scottish literature

by that fragment, and possibly by other unacknowledged things of the same kind, remains yet to be adequately estimated, one notes that among those juniors of Ramsay who had entered on the career of literature after him and under his observation, but who had died before him, were Robert Blair, James Thomson, and William Hamilton of Bangour. David Malloch, once an Edinburgh *protégé* of Ramsay's, but a naturalised Londoner since 1723, and Anglicised into Mallet, was about the oldest of Ramsay's Scottish literary survivors, and does not count for much. But, when Ramsay died, there were already in existence, at ages varying from full maturity to mere infancy, more than fifty other Scots who are memorable now, on one ground or another, in the British Literary History of the eighteenth century. Some of these, such as Armstrong, Smollett, Mickle, and Macpherson, migrated to England, as Arbuthnot, Thomson, and Mallet had done; others, such as Reid, Campbell, and Beattie, are associated locally with Aberdeen, Glasgow, or some rural part of Scotland; but by far the largest proportion, like Allan Ramsay himself, had their homes in Edinburgh, or were essentially of Edinburgh celebrity by all their belongings. Kames, David Hume, Monboddo, Dr. Robert Henry, Dr. Hugh Blair, Dr. Thomas Blacklock, Principal Robertson, John Home, Adam Smith, Dr. Adam Ferguson, Lord Hailes, Hutton, Black, Falconer, Professor Robison, James Boswell, George Chalmers, Henry Mackenzie, Professor Playfair, Robert Fergusson, Dugald Stewart, and John Pinkerton: these, with others whom their names will suggest, were the northern lights of the Scottish capital through the half-century or more in which Dr. Johnson wielded the literary dictatorship of

London, and he and Goldsmith, and, after they were gone, Burke and Gibbon, were seen in the London streets. Greater and smaller together, were they not a sufficient northern constellation? Do not we of modern Edinburgh still remember them now with a peculiar pride, and visit, out of curiosity, the houses in the Old Town squares or closes where some of them had their dwellings? Do not traditions of them, and of their physiognomies and habits, linger yet about the Lawnmarket, the High Street, the Canongate, the Parliament House, and the site of our University? Was it not the fact that in their days there were two recognised and distinct centres or foci of literary production in Great Britain: the great London on the banks of the Thames being one; but the other 400 miles farther north, in the smaller city of heights and hollows that stood ridged beside Arthur Seat on the banks of the Forth? And so, not without a track of enduring radiance yet, vanishes from our gaze what we may reckon as the third age of the Literary History of Edinburgh.

A fourth was to follow, and in some respects a still greater. It was in July 1786 that there was published the first, or Kilmarnock, edition of the Poems of Robert Burns; and it was in the winter of that same year that the ploughman-poet paid his memorable first visit to Edinburgh. On one particular day in the course of that visit, as all know, Burns encountered, in the house of Dr. Adam Ferguson, a lame fair-haired youth, of fifteen years of age, upon whom, in the midst of other company, his eyes were led, by a happy accident, to fix themselves for a moment or two with some special interest. This was young Walter Scott. In the same week, or thereabouts, it was that another Edin-

burgh boy, two years younger than Scott, standing somewhere in the High Street, and staring at a man whose unusual appearance had struck him, was told by a bystander that he might well look, for that man was Robert Burns. This was young Francis Jeffrey. What a futurity for Edinburgh in the coming lives of those two young natives of hers, both of whom had just seen the wondrous man from Ayrshire! In 1802, when Burns had been dead for six years, Scott, already the author of this or that, was collecting the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border"; and in the end of the same year appeared the first number of the *Edinburgh Review*, projected in Jeffrey's house in Buccleuch Place, and of which, after its third number, Jeffrey was to be the sole editor. Pass thence to 1832, the year of Scott's death. How enormous the accession in those thirty years to all that had been previously illustrious in the literary history of Edinburgh! On the one hand, all the marvellous offspring of Scott's creative genius, the novels as well as the poems; on the other, all Jeffrey's brilliant and far-darting criticisms, with those of his associate reviewers, from Horner, Brougham, and Sydney Smith, to the juniors who succeeded them. In any retrospect of this kind, however, criticism pales by the side of creation; and it is in the blaze of the completed life of the greater of the two rising stars of 1802 that the present Edinburgh now necessarily recollects and re-imagines the Edinburgh of those thirty following years.

II.

It is not for nothing that the very central and supreme object in the architecture of our present Edinburgh is the monument to Sir Walter Scott,—the finest

monument, I think, that has yet been raised anywhere on the earth to the memory of a man of letters. The Edinburgh of the thirty years from 1802 to 1832 was, is, and will ever be, the Edinburgh of Sir Walter Scott. All persons and things else that were contained in the Edinburgh of those thirty years are thought of now as having had their being and shelter under the presidency of that one overarching personality. When these are counted up, however, the array should be sufficiently impressive, even were the covering arch removed. The later lives of Henry Mackenzie, Dugald Stewart, and Playfair, and of the Alison of the *Essays on Taste*; the lyric genius of the Baroness Nairne, and her long unavowed songs; the rougher and more prolific muse of James Hogg; Dr. M'Crie and his historical writings; all the early promise of the scholarly and poetical Leyden; some of the earlier strains of Campbell; Dr. Thomas Brown and his metaphysical teachings in aberration from Dugald Stewart; Mrs. Brunton and her novels; Mrs. Johnstone and her novels; Miss Ferrier and her novels; the too brief career of the philologist Dr. Alexander Murray; much of the most active career, scientific and literary, of Sir David Brewster; the Scottish Record researches of Thomas Thomson, and the contributions of Kirkpatrick Sharpe, and many of those of David Laing, to Scottish history and Scottish literary antiquities; the starting of *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1817, and the outflashing in that periodical of Wilson as its "Christopher North," with his coadjutor Lockhart; all the rush of fame that attended the "Noctes Ambrosianæ" in that periodical, with the more quiet popularity of such particular contributions to its pages as those of David Macbeth Moir; the

first intimations of the extraordinary erudition and the philosophic power of Sir William Hamilton; the first years of the Edinburgh section of the life of Dr. Chalmers; the first tentative residences in Edinburgh, and ultimate settlement there, in connection with *Blackwood* and other periodicals, of the strange English De Quincey, driven thither by stress of livelihood after trial of London and the Lakes; the somewhat belated outset, in obscure Edinburgh lodgings, and then in a house in Comely Bank, of what was to be the great career of Thomas Carlyle; the more precocious literary assiduity of young Robert Chambers, with results of various kinds already in print: such are some of the phenomena discernible in the history of Edinburgh during those thirty years of Scott's continuous ascendency through which there ran the equally continuous shaft of Jeffrey's critical leadership.

Nor when Scott died was his influence at an end. Edinburgh moved on, indeed, after his familiar figure had been lost to her, into another tract of years, full of continued and still interesting literary activity, in which, of all Scott's survivors, *who* so fit to succeed him in the presidency, *who* called to it with such acclamation, as the long-known, long-admired, and still magnificent Christopher North? In many respects, however, this period of Edinburgh's continued literary activity, from 1832 onwards, under the presidency of Wilson, was really but a prolongation, a kind of afterglow, of the era of the great Sir Walter.

Not absolutely so. In the Edinburgh from which Sir Walter had vanished there were various intellectual developments, various manifestations of literary power and tendency, as well as of social energy, which Sir Walter could not have foreseen, which were even

alien to his genius, and which owed little or nothing to his example. There were fifteen years more of the thunders and lightnings of the great Chalmers; of real importance after a different fashion was the cool rationality of George Combe, with his physiological and other teachings; the little English De Quincey, hidden away in no one knows how many Edinburgh domiciles in succession, and appearing in the Edinburgh streets and suburbs only furtively and timorously when he appeared at all, was sending forth more and more of his wonderful essays and prose-phantasies; less of a recluse, but somewhat of a recluse too, and a late burner of the lamp, Sir William Hamilton was still pursuing those studies and speculations which were to constitute him in the end the most momentous force since Hume in the profounder philosophy of Great Britain; and, not to multiply other cases, had there not come into Edinburgh the massive Hugh Miller from Cromarty, his self-acquired English classicism superinduced upon native Scandinavian strength, and powdered with the dust of the Old Red Sandstone?

Not the less, parallel with all this, ran the transmitted influence of Sir Walter Scott. What we may call the *Scotticism of Scott*,—that special passion for all that appertained to the land of brown heath and shaggy wood, that affection for Scottish themes and legends in preference to all others, which he had impressed upon Scottish Literature so strongly that its perpetuation threatens to become a restriction and a narrowness, was the chief inspiration of many of those Scottish writers who came after him, in Edinburgh or elsewhere. One sees a good deal of this in Christopher North himself, and also in Hugh Miller. It

appears in more pronounced form in the long-protracted devotion of the good David Laing to those labours of Scottish antiquarianism which he had begun while Scott was alive and under Scott's auspices, and in the accession to the same field of labour of such later scholars as Cosmo Innes. It appears in the character of many of those writings which marked the advance of Robert Chambers, after the days of his youthful attachment to Scott personally, to his more mature and more independent celebrity. It appears, moreover, in the nature of much of that publishing enterprise of the two Chamberses jointly the commencement of which by the starting of *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* in the very year of Scott's death is itself a memorable thing in the annals of Edinburgh; and it is discernible in a good deal of the contemporary publishing activity of other Edinburgh firms. Finally, to keep still to individuals, do we not see it, though in contrasted guises, in the literary lives, so closely in contact, of John Hill Burton and William Edmonstoune Aytoun? If we should seek for a convenient stopping-point at which to round off our recollections of the whole of that age of the literary history of Edinburgh which includes both the era of the living Scott and the described prolongation of that era, then, unless we stop at the death of Wilson in 1854, may not the death of Aytoun in 1865 be the point chosen? No more remarkable representative than Aytoun to the last of what we have called the afterglow from the spirit of Scott. Various as were his abilities, rich as was his vein of humour, what was the dominant sentiment of all his serious verse? What but that to which he has given expression in his imagined soliloquy of the exiled and aging Prince Charlie?—

"Let me feel the breezes blowing
Fresh along the mountain side!
Let me see the purple heather,
Let me hear the thundering tide,
Be it hoarse as Corrievreckan
Spouting when the storm is high!
Give me back one hour of Scotland;
Let me see it ere I die."

In our chronological review of the literary history of Edinburgh to the point to which it has thus been brought, there has been, it will have been observed, the intervention of at least one age of poverty in what would else be a pretty continuous show of plenty. There are among us some who tell us that we are now in an age of poverty again, a season of the lean kine of Pharaoh's dream. *Ichabod*, they tell us, may be now written on the front of the Register House; and Edinburgh is living on her past glories! As this complaint was raised again and again in previous times to which its application is now a matter of surprise, may we not hope that its recurrence in the present is only a passing wave of that feeling, common to all times, and not unbecoming or unuseful, which underestimates, or even neglects, what is near and round about, in comparison with what is old or far off? The question whether Edinburgh is now despicable intellectually in comparison with her former self, like the larger question, usually opened out from this smaller one, and pressed along with it, whether Scotland at large is not intellectually poor in comparison with her former self, is really a question of statistics. As a certain range of time is requisite to form a sufficient basis for a fair inventory, perhaps we ought to wait a little. When one remembers, however, that among those who would have to be included in the inventory,

inasmuch as they dropped out from the society of Edinburgh considerably after that year 1865 which has been suggested as a separating point between the defunct past and the still current, are not only such of the older and already-named ornaments of Edinburgh as David Laing, Cosmo Innes, William and Robert Chambers, and Hill Burton, but also such individualities of later conspicuous mark as Alexander Smith, Alexander Russel, and Dr. John Brown, then, perhaps, there might be some confidence that, if one were to proceed to the more delicate business of comprising in the list all that suit among the living, together with those of whom there is any gleam "upon the forehead of the town to come," the total would exhibit an average not quite shameful. Perhaps, however, as has been said, it is too soon yet to begin to count.

Those who believe in the literary decadence of Edinburgh naturally find the cause to some extent in the increasing centralisation of the commerce of British Literature universally in London. They point to such facts as that the *Edinburgh Review* has long ceased to be an Edinburgh periodical, that some Edinburgh publishing firms have transferred their headquarters to London, and that other Edinburgh publishing firms are understood to be meditating a similar removal. Now, in the first place, is there not here some exaggeration of the facts? London, with its population of four or five millions, is so vast a nation in itself that the fair comparison in this matter should not be between London and Edinburgh, but between London and the whole of Scotland; and, if it were found that the amount of book-production in Edinburgh were even one-twentieth of that of

London, the scores between the two places would then, in proportion to their bulks, be about exactly equal. I cannot pretend to have used all the available means for the computation; but, in view of some facts before me, I should be surprised if it turned out that Edinburgh did not come up to her proportional mark. Edinburgh possesses, at all events, a most flourishing printing industry. The printing of Edinburgh is celebrated all the world over; a very large proportion of the books published in London are printed in Edinburgh. That is something; but what of the *publishing* business? From the Edinburgh Directory of this year, I find that among the booksellers of the city there are 62 who are also publishers. As against these 62 publishing houses in Edinburgh there ought, in the proportion of the bulks, to be about 1260 in London; but from the London Directory of last year I find that the number of London publishing houses was but 373,—*i.e.* that London, in proportion to its size, has only about one-third of the publishing machinery of Edinburgh. The mere relative numbers, however, do not suffice for the comparison; for may not the proportionally fewer London houses have been doing a much larger amount of business, and may not the publishing machinery of Edinburgh have been lying comparatively idle? Well, I do not know; but the recent publishing lists of our Edinburgh houses show no signs of declining activity. The completed Ninth Edition of the great *Encyclopædia Britannica*, for example, has been wholly an Edinburgh enterprise, and a new edition of another Edinburgh Cyclopædia is now running its course. Where Edinburgh falls most obviously behind London at present is perhaps in the dimensions of her journalism and her apparatus

of periodical literature. *Blackwood's Magazine* and *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* exist still; but other literary periodicals, once known in Edinburgh, are extinct, and one can recollect the time when there were more newspapers in Edinburgh than there are now. Those, however, were the days of twice-a-week newspapers or once-a-week newspapers; and in the present daily journalism of Edinburgh one has to observe not only the unprecedented amount of energy and writing ability at work for all the ordinary requirements of newspapers, but also (a very noteworthy feature of Edinburgh journalism in particular) the increasing extent to which, by frequent non-political articles and continual accounts of current books, it is annexing to itself the functions hitherto performed by magazines, reviews, and other literary miscellanies. But, suppose that, all these appearances notwithstanding, it should be made out that the publishing machinery of Edinburgh *is* scantier and slacker than it was, there is another consideration yet in reserve. The real measure of the present or the future literary capabilities of Edinburgh, or of Scotland generally, is not the extent of the publishing machinery which either Edinburgh, or Scotland generally, still retains within herself, but the amount and worth of the actual or potential authorship, the literary brain and ability of all kinds, that may be still resident within the bounds of Edinburgh or of Scotland, wheresoever the products are published. Those who are so fond of upbraiding the present Edinburgh more especially with the former literary distinction of Edinburgh in the latter half of the eighteenth century,—the days of Hume, Adam Smith, Robertson, and others,—seem to be ignorant of a most important fact. The publishing machinery

of Edinburgh in those days was very poor; and the chief books of those Edinburgh celebrities were published in London. That there came a change in this respect was owing mainly, or wholly, to one man. His name was Archibald Constable. Of this man, the Napoleon of the British publishing trade of his time, and of such particular facts in his publishing career as his bold association of himself with the *Edinburgh Review* from its very outset, and his life-long connection with Scott, all have some knowledge from tradition. But hear Lord Cockburn's succinct account of him in general. "Constable," says Lord Cockburn, "began as a lad in Hill's shop, "and had hardly set up for himself when he reached "the summit of his business. He rushed out, and took "possession of the open field, as if he had been aware "from the first of the existence of the latent spirits "which a skilful conjurer might call from the depths "of the population to the service of literature. Abandoning the old timid and grudging system, he stood out "as the general patron and payer of all promising "publications, and confounded not merely his rivals "in trade, but his very authors, by his unheard-of "prices. Ten, even twenty, guineas a sheet for a "review, £2000 or £3000 for a single poem, and "£1000 each for two philosophical dissertations, drew "authors from dens where they would otherwise have "starved, and made Edinburgh a literary mart, famous "with strangers, and the pride of its own citizens." These words of Lord Cockburn's are too high-flown, in so far as they might beget wrong conceptions of what was or is possible. But, recollecting what Constable did,—recollecting that it was mainly his example and success that called into being those other Edinburgh

publishing firms, contemporary with his own or subsequent, which have maintained till now the place won by him for Edinburgh in the commerce of British literature,—recollecting also how largely he led the way in that enormous change in the whole system of the British book trade, now almost consummated, which has liberated publishers from the good old necessity of waiting for the authors that might come to them, one by one, with already-prepared manuscripts under their arm, the fruit of their careful private labours on self-chosen subjects, and has constituted publishers themselves, to a great extent, the real generators and regulators of literature, projecting serials, manuals, sets of school-books, and whatever else they see to be in demand, and employing literary labour preferably in the service of these enterprises of their own,—recollecting all this, may we not speculate on what might be the consequences in the present Edinburgh of the appearance of another Archibald Constable? The appurtenances are all ready. One has heard complaints lately of the dearth in Edinburgh of those materials in the shape of collections of books which would be requisite for the future sufficiency of the city as a manufactory of such kinds of literature as admit of being manufactured. That is a sheer hallucination. Next to London, and perhaps to Oxford, Edinburgh has the largest provision of books of any city in the British Empire. There are at this moment 800,000 volumes,—say close on a million,—on the shelves of the various public or corporate libraries. Much remains to be done towards making all this wealth of books in Edinburgh as available as it might be; and there ought to be no rest among us till that particular advance is made

towards an ideal state of things which shall consist in the conversion of the present noble library of the Faculty of Advocates into the nucleus of a great National Library for all Scotland. But, even as things are, why be indolent, why not utilise our implements? Doubt not that in the present Edinburgh and in the present Scotland, as in other parts of Her Majesty's dominions, there are, as Napier of Merchiston phrased it, "good ingines, versed and exercised in all manner of honest science," who, if they were to bestir themselves, and especially if there were another Archibald Constable in the midst of them, would find plenty of excellent employment without needing, unless they chose, to change the territory of their abode!

THE END

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